

Frequently asked questions

Q. How do you get people to come out at night, especially in the middle of winter? Is it safe at night?

A. The experience of numerous PEA chapels around the world is that many people love night adoration. The Holy Spirit moves them to choose the night hours. Having the chapel open 24/7 allows everyone to participate because everyone can find at least one hour a week to spend with Jesus. The chapel has a landline with emergency numbers posted next to it. There is adequate lighting around the car parks and pathway to the chapel. The door to the chapel can be locked at night. This enables any adorer to lock themselves in and check to see who the next adorer is before letting them in. Evidence from overseas chapels show virtually no safety concerns at all. In the seven months since the chapel at St Gregory's has been operating there have been no issues at all.

Q. What happens if there is a big snowfall or another earthquake?

A. Procedures are in place to deal with big snowfall, e.g., a team to shovel snow, or if conditions are too bad, then the chapel will close. Procedures are also in place to deal with earthquakes, fires and other emergencies.

Q. What happens if someone does not turn up for their hour? What happens at Christmas and New Year when people go away? What do I do if I can't do my hour?

A. If an adorer does not turn up and you are left alone, you have two options. The adorer can either remain until another person turns up or they can repose the Blessed Sacrament and secure the tabernacle and chapel. Many adoration chapels around the world continue on public holidays such as Christmas and New Year (such as the chapel at St Gregory's did). If you cannot do your hour the first step is to contact a substitute and ask them to fill in. If you cannot find a substitute you then call your day leader who will help you find someone. All the procedures are listed on this web page.

Q. How will you ensure that the Blessed Sacrament is secure at all times?

A. The Blessed Sacrament can never be left alone under any circumstances. This has been emphasised to all adorers over and over again. If someone does not turn up and you have to leave, procedures are in place for you to repose the Blessed Sacrament and lock the chapel (see above).

Q. What is the point of Exposition anyway? Can't we just pray in front of the tabernacle?

A. Although it is not essential for exposition to take place to have Eucharistic adoration, adorers report experiencing a greater sense of intimacy with Jesus, and attentiveness of mind and heart to prayer when they are able to actually "see" our Eucharistic Lord. Some people describe the difference between spending time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament exposed and spending time with Him in the tabernacle to be like the difference between conversing with a friend face-to-face and conversing with him through a closed door. Moreover, it motivates adorers to be faithful to their hours for which they are scheduled because they know that Jesus must not be left alone in the Blessed Sacrament exposed in a monstrance, whereas He can be left alone in the tabernacle. With exposition, the scheduled adorers are guardians of the Blessed Sacrament as well as adorers, so their presence is necessary.

Q. Who pays for PEA?

A. As this is a diocesan apostolate, the Diocese will pay all the costs of running this Perpetual Adoration Chapel with a contribution from the parish.

Q. We don't have the Catholic population to support this.

A. Yes we do, as seven months of continuous Perpetual Adoration proves. There are 168 hours a week, so only 168 adorers are required to keep perpetual adoration going. Parishes overseas have been able to maintain perpetual adoration with relatively small congregations for many years.

Q. Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration is not possible because exposition must be discontinued during the Easter Triduum, and also each time Mass is said in the chapel.

A. “Perpetual adoration” is a popular term to describe the almost continuous exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and such temporary discontinuation of Eucharistic Adoration is not generally regarded as interrupting the perpetuity of adoration. The documents of the Church insist that Adoration must cease during the Easter Triduum. This already happens at chapels around the world.

Q. What about Sunday Mass in the Church? Isn't it forbidden to have exposition concurrent with Mass?

A. Canon 941-2 simply states: "Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament may not take place while Mass is being celebrated in the same area of the Church or oratory." The chapel at St Gregory's is separated from the church by a wall and door and therefore complies with Canon 941-2. The only times that it is necessary that the Blessed Sacrament be reposed during Mass is when Mass is celebrated in the chapel itself. This happens nearly every day in the chapel.

Q. The Lord's presence among us is not limited to His presence in the Eucharist. He is with us in other ways as well. To mention a few: He is with us when we gather together for prayer, celebrate the sacraments, and read Sacred Scripture. Clearly, the Eucharist is the most celebrated presence of those presences of Christ. But, nonetheless, it needs to be kept in proper context.

A. In the ways mentioned, Jesus is present in His power, in His authority, in His Spirit. But in the Eucharist, Jesus is present in His Person — Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. The Eucharist is the literal fulfilment of His words: Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world. Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration is a bit of heaven on earth because in perpetual adoration Jesus is continuously adored by the faithful here on earth, just as He is continuously adored by the angels and saints in heaven.

Q. What are the fruits of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament?

A. Testimonies from all around the world testify to the many graces, blessings and miracles that come from perpetual adoration. Perpetual Adoration helps people grow in their relationship with God. Check out the “What is Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration” page for comments from people in Christchurch about how Adoration has impacted their life.