

Waiting

Many of us come to spend time with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament because we are waiting. It may be as simple as having time to wait for the bus — or to pick the children up from school. We have a bit of time to wait and we use it to spend a few minutes in quiet prayer with Jesus.

Some of us come with a very different kind of waiting. We might be waiting for results — medical or exams. We might be waiting for people to make an important decision that will affect us. We might be waiting for an important letter or meeting to take place.

This kind of waiting has a very different feel from using the odd few minutes. We bring a lot of other feelings with us. There may be impatience — why can't they just get on and decide. There may be anxiety — 'what will happen if...?' There may be fear — or even dread.

Our waiting in these circumstances may well be fidgety and we will find it hard to concentrate. We may worry about what other people think of us as we feel the need to get up and walk around — or pick up and put down books or rosaries. Try not to worry about this! Every person in the church has times like this. And, at the end of the day, the main person to be concerned about it Jesus — and he would much rather you were there as you are rather than staying away until you are able to wait patiently for whatever you are dealing with.

Jesus and Waiting

Jesus knew about waiting. He spent thirty years preparing for his public ministry — waiting until the time was right. He may have waited at the bedside of his foster father, Joseph, as he died — supporting his mother and dealing with all the feelings around the end of the life of a loved one. He spent time in prayer — in a way waiting on his Father for insight and wisdom. On the last day of his life, he waited in the Garden of Gethsemane — waiting for those who were going to arrest him and take him to torture and death.

Whatever you bring to your waiting, Jesus can empathise. We can also see his presence in the Blessed Sacrament as more waiting... his willingness to wait for people to come to spend time with him. Waiting for you — to wait with him — and together to prepare for whatever it is that lies ahead for you.

Acknowledgements

Time before the Blessed Sacrament is a series of leaflets produced by the Spirituality Committee in preparation for *Adoremus*. It is intended for individual reflection as part of a time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament or Exposition. It could also be used with small groups.

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The Death of St Joseph Anonymous (German). Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

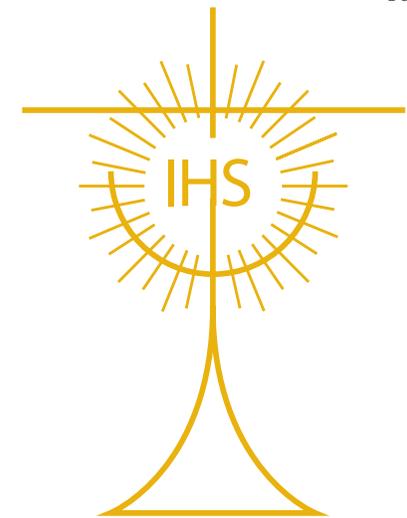
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Time before the Blessed Sacrament

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I waited, waited for the Lord
and he stooped down to me;
he heard my cry.

Psalm 39:1



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Looking at Scripture

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?

But with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.

My soul is longing for the Lord
more than watchman for daybreak.
(Let the watchman count on daybreak
and Israel on the Lord.)

Psalm 129 (130)



Reflection

What am I waiting for at the moment?

How do I feel about my waiting?

How do the words of the psalm express
how I feel — or how I have felt — about
waiting?

Why does the psalm writer repeat that last
line? And what does it remind us about
waiting?

How might Jesus respond to what you are
bringing into his waiting for you today?

Prayer

Lord Jesus,
you experienced the joys and challenges
of waiting
and now you wait for us here,
hidden in the Blessed Sacrament.

Here I am,
bringing with me my own waiting for...

(name the thing you are waiting for)

I bring my feelings of... knowing that you
understand how these feel.

As we share this time,
I pray for the graces I need
to live this time of waiting fruitfully —
not seeking to make it shorter
than it needs to be
but to live it knowing
that you are in this waiting with me.

May I join the psalmist
and look to what is to come
with hope and confidence in you.