

Eucharistic Procession

Following Mass, the faithful would process with the Blessed Sacrament into the surrounding community or countryside. This is a visible way of taking the Lord into our community and our lives. It is an expression of faith and a moment to reach beyond the parish community to the larger civic community. Such a procession can become an opportunity to talk about our Catholic Faith, about our belief in the Real Presence and the call of all Catholics to attract and form intentional disciples of Jesus. What better way to invite this dialogue than by a procession to express our faith?

Planning a Eucharistic Procession.

1. Select a chairperson to lead this effort.
2. Create a committee of interested parishioners.
3. Plan the procession
 - a. The suggested date is after the Corpus Christi Mass, June 23rd or on the evening before following Mass on June 22nd.
 - b. Decide the route of the procession. It could be around the church property or more properly along a public road or street.
 - c. Contact the civil authorities to make sure the procession is possible and obtain any “parade permits” that might be required.
 - d. If you are walking on a busy street, develop a plan for security and traffic flow.
4. For the process the following items are needed
 - a. A monstrance
 - b. Incense
 - c. At least two candles
 - d. Processional cross
 - e. The Year of the Eucharist Banner
 - f. Worship aids with Eucharistic Songs and the rosary prayers if parishioners are not familiar with these prayers.
 - g. A cloth canopy if the parish has one or chooses to make one. (Description below)
5. Following Communion
 - a. Expose the Blessed Sacrament on the altar in the monstrance.
 - b. After the Prayer after Communion
 - c. The priest will incense the Blessed Sacrament while an appropriate Eucharistic hymn is sung.
 - d. The server with the processional cross will begin the procession.

- e. The priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament is preceded by the servers with candles and the incense.
 - f. The people follow behind the priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament. The banner can be carried in the midst of the people, at the beginning or near the end.
 - g. During the procession the rosary can be prayed, and hymns can be sung. You can alternate between the decades of the rosary and singing a song. A hymn can be sung followed by the rosary and then another hymn or two. It is important to keep the people in the procession engaged in prayer and focused on the Blessed Sacrament.
6. The length of the procession is the choice of the committee. The procession should return to the church.
 7. When the procession is completed, the people gather in the pews. The priest places the Monstrance on the altar.
 8. Benediction follows
 - a. Incense while singing Down in Adoration Falling (Tantum Ergo)
 - b. Eucharistic Prayer
 - c. Eucharistic Blessing with the Humeral veil
 - d. Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament
 - e. Divine Praises OR another Eucharistic Hymn
 9. Following the procession, a time of fellowship is appropriate. The committee will need to line up the donations of snacks and provide drinks.

A canopy for a Eucharistic Procession.

Any outdoor Eucharistic Procession can use a canopy. The canopy serves a dual purpose. On one hand, it protects the Blessed Sacrament during the procession. It creates a “sacred space” that is reserved for the priest carrying the monstrance. As a practical matter, it protects the monstrance against anything that might fall on it, including light rain. Secondly, the faithful at the back of the procession can locate the Blessed Sacrament at the head of the procession more easily.

A canopy can be purchased or fashioned from white material. It can be as elaborate or simple as the parish community would like. Four poles are used to carry the canopy above the Blessed Sacrament.

The material can be purchased and hemmed. It should be rectangular in shape. Grommets can be inset on the four corners of the hemmed cloth. (see diagram)

The poles can be closet rods cut into about eight foot lengths. Attach a long, strong nail or screw into the end of the pole sticking out far enough to place it through the grommet.

As an alternate, the canopy can be made with a pocket around the edge to insert poles to support the canopy. (see diagram) These poles that edge the canopy would be attached to the upright poles that hold the canopy above the monstrance.

The canopy is carried by four persons who are strong enough to handle the canopy in the event of wind.

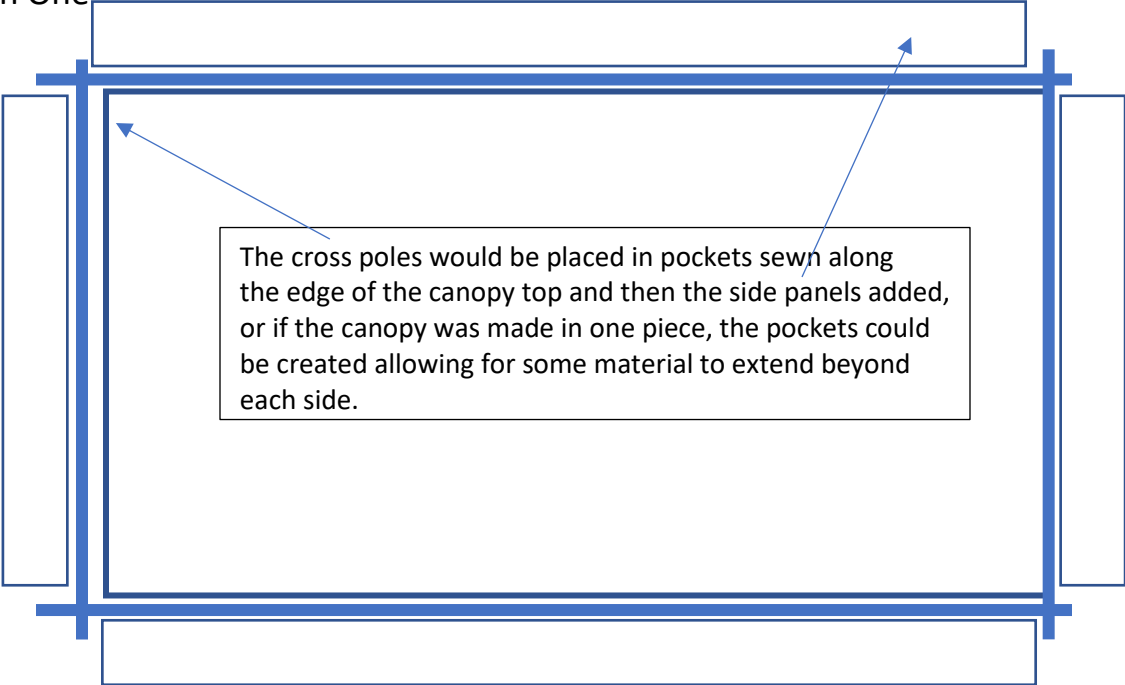
The four persons gathered at the entrance to the church and when the priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance leaves the church, the four canopy carriers join him, carry the canopy so that the monstrance is centered under the canopy.

Below is a picture of materials needed.

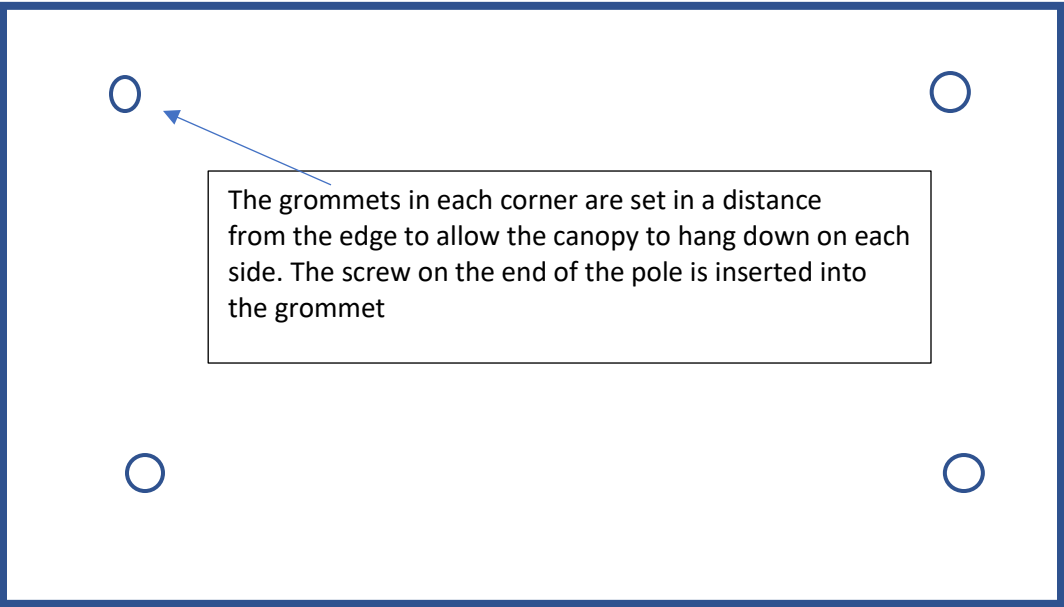
Making a canopy

Option One

poles



Option Two





The upright poles would be about eight feet in length with a nail or screw inserted into the end to hold the canopy with grommets or alternately a hook attached to the side to hold the cross poles.