A Genuflection in Time  
"Quarant'Ore"  
The 40 Hours Devotion

Rest in the consecration. Reside with Our Lord Who is really truly present with us.

Begun by St. Philip Neri in the 16th century, the Forty Hours Devotion (in French the "Quarant'Ore") is a special forty-hour period of personal and collective adoration and continuous prayer of the community before the Blessed Sacrament.

Why forty hours? This genuflection in time has a sacred basis.

This is in honor Our Lord in repose; the time He spent in the tomb. “Three days,” according to the Creed, or from Friday 3:00pm until Sunday at daybreak (6.00am). Also because 40 is a sacred interval according to Holy Scripture; from Noah’s time adrift, to the Israelites in the desert, to Jesus period of fasting in the desert, to the time between Christ’s Resurrection and Ascension.

This special devotion is renown for the signal graces of protection from evil, resisting temptation, reparation for our sins and for the poor souls in purgatory, and deliverance from calamities whether spiritual or natural. A plenary indulgence is received if the proscribed conditions are met.

St. John Neumann (1811-60), fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, said of this devotion, "The Eucharist is the living rock of the Church. It's about adoring the Blessed Sacrament and feeling that the Lord is present. The most sublime, most high, most true and effective mystery." Bishop Neumann was the first in this United States to promote the devotion.

This Lent the 40 hours devotion to Our Lord’s mystical physical presence with us comes to Saint Margaret Mary parish on March 11, 2011 at 2.00pm. Come adore the “source and summit of Christian life,” or, as St. Francis de Sales calls it, “the sun of all spiritual exercises.” It will begin with a Solemn Mass; Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Chaplet of Divine Mercy; continue uninterrupted for 40 hours of Exposition prayer, concluding with a Eucharistic Procession on Sunday, March 13, at 7.30am.

While no single person is expected to spend the entire 40 hours in adoration, some have expressed this interest. Some have likened the devotion to the piety equivalent of a marathon, which is popular with many. Prayers will especially focus on the strengthening of families today, for our young people, for new vocations to the priesthood and religious life and for the conversion of sinners.