

DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

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Diocesan Pastoral Center

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REFLECTION ON ADVENT EVENING PRAYER

In recent years the preparation for Christmas has been lost due to commercialism in the months leading up to Christmas. As soon as Halloween is over the count down for Christmas begins. The stores bring out the Christmas decorations along with messages of the commercial side of Christmas which emphasize the **holiday** season. Santa Clause appears everywhere. Advent becomes a season of Christmas parties and shopping.

Catholics seem to have missed the boat when it comes to understanding the true meaning of Advent. To bring us back to preparation for Christmas, St. Joseph Church, Sydney, hosted Evening Prayer for the people in the Sydney and surrounding areas.

The participants required for the ministries, comprised members from the various Churches in the area. This allowed us to come together, share our gifts and build up the community of faith through the experience of praying in a communal setting expressing our praise, glory and thanksgiving to God for all the blessings we have received.

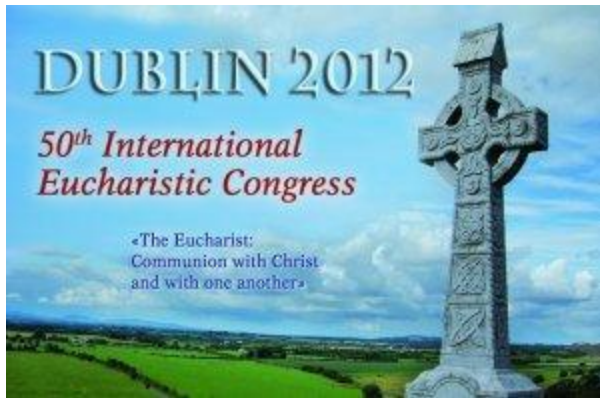
This was my first experience of the official liturgy of the Evening Prayer in a communal setting. I pray daily, the Liturgy of the Hours at home, but it was not until I attended the Prayer at Church that I came to understand the full meaning of the prayer. The liturgy provided an atmosphere conducive to experiencing the fullness of the presence of God. The symbols of the lighting of candles, the use of incense and the singing of the psalms and canticle elevated my spirit to another level enabling me to be more in tune with the Lord.

I am now looking forward to the Lenten season when the community will come together again to participate in the Evening Prayer of the Church.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them.

(Matt. 18:20)

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50th INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

Two years ago, at the end of the 49th International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec City, Pope Benedict XVI announced that the 50th International Eucharistic Congress would be held in Dublin Ireland, from June 10-17, 2012. This is the second time that Dublin will host the Congress: the Irish hosted the 31st Congress in 1932.

A Eucharistic Congress is a gathering of people which aims to:

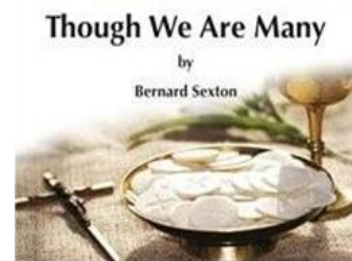
- promote awareness of the centrality of the Eucharist in the life and mission of the Catholic Church
- help improve our understanding and celebration of the liturgy
- draw attention to the social dimension of the Eucharist

The aims are achieved through a program of liturgical and cultural events, catechesis and testimonies, and workshops during the week of the

Congress. The daily celebration of Eucharist is at the very heart of the Congress.

CONGRESS THEME

The theme of the Congress is: *The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with one another*. It has its roots in “*The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*”, where we read that by partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another. “Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread”. In this way all of us are made members of His Body, “but severally members one of another” (*Lumen Gentium*, 7)



OFFICIAL HYMN

The official hymn of the 50th International Congress is “*Though We Are Many*”. It brings together a variety of themes that feed into the theme of the Congress – The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with one another.

The Eucharistic congress coincides with the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council. In addition to drawing on Scripture, the anthem reflects elements of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, *Lumen Gentium*, and *Gaudium et Spes*, as well as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. The anthem consists of a feast of themes relating to Eucharist and the lifestyle it inspires, making it a hymn for all times and places. You may listen to the hymn on the official web site.



CONGRESS BELL

The Eucharistic Congress Bell is one of the key symbols of the Congress. The congress Bell will be a reminder of the call to faith and the call to prayer. The Bell will be carried and pushed all around Ireland, similar to the journey of the Arc of the Covenant in Canada. Resources have been devised to accompany the Bell so that, as it is rung, it will be heard by many people as a form of invitation.

PASTORAL PREPARATION

Over the time between now and the Congress, a program of preparation has been prepared which will hopefully lead people into a common program of reflection and learning about Eucharist. The theme will be explored in four distinct Stages of preparation:

Stage One: (Autumn/Winter 2010) Christ gathers us as a Eucharistic Community.

Stage Two: (Spring/Summer 2011) Christ gathers us to listen, to hear, to be nourished and to be formed into community by God's word.

Stage Three: (Autumn/Winter 2011) Christ gathers us to be nourished for Communion by the Bread of Life, becoming the Body of Christ.

Stage Four: (Spring 2012) Christ gathers and strengthens us for Mission by the word and the Bread of Life.

Over the next two years we are all invited to renew our understanding and commitment to creating parishes and pastoral occasions where communion with Christ and one another is real, meaningful and an occasion that renews the community of faith that gathers.

The material for Stage 1 can be downloaded from the official web site. There are 5 movements to this first stage. The material for the second stage will be on line in the near future.

(logo and images used with permission)



LOGO

The Logo, is entitled *People in Communion*. The design is based on the idea of people “from every nation, race, tribe and language” (Rev.7:9) being drawn together in Communion as “One Body” formed by faith in the person of Jesus Christ, the lamb of God, and the sacrifice he made upon the cross.

There are two separate sources of inspiration for the design:

- Paragraph 7 of **Lumen Gentium**, which reads: “Really partaking of the body and blood of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another. Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread.”
- Paragraph 3 of the Encyclical Letter **Ecclesia de Eucharistia** of Pope John Paul II, which sums up the design, reads: The Church was born of the paschal mystery. For this very reason the Eucharist, which is in an outstanding way the sacrament of the paschal mystery, stands at the centre of the Church’s life....

CONGRESS PRAYER

In preparing for the Congress people throughout the world are invited to join in prayer asking God for wisdom to prepare a Congress which responds to the needs of this particular time. Pray that the generosity of Christ’s gift of himself in the Eucharist may be reflected in our own openness to growth and our willingness to give of ourselves in service.

50th International Congress Prayer

Lord Jesus,
You were sent by the Father
to gather together those who are scattered.
You came among us, doing good and bringing
healing, announcing the Word of salvation
and giving the Bread which lasts forever.
Be our companion on life’s pilgrim way.

May your Holy Spirit inflame our hearts,
enliven our hope and open our minds,
so that together with our sisters and brothers in
faith we may recognize you in the Scriptures
and in the breaking of bread.
May your Holy Spirit transform us into one body
and lead us to walk humbly on the earth,
in justice and love, as witnesses of your
resurrection.

In communion with Mary,
whom you gave to us as our Mother
at the foot of the cross, through you
may all praise, honour and blessing be to the Father
in the Holy Spirit and in the Church,
now and forever. Amen

Registration for individuals and groups will be available in June 2011. However, accommodations for groups can now be booked. See www.iec2012.ie for more information. If you are planning to attend, e-mail the Diocesan Office of Worship so we can book a block of rooms early to ensure we are close to the Congress.