

Resources for Parishes and Schools  
in  
Preparation for the Eucharistic Congress

2019 Florida Eucharistic Congress



*For I know the plans I have for you*

March 29-30, 2019

Prime Osborn Convention Center Jacksonville, FL

Prepared by the  
Office of Christian Formation,  
Diocese of St. Augustine

# Background Information

Some questions about Eucharistic Congresses

Pontifical Committee for International Congresses

## 1. What is a Eucharistic Congress?

A Eucharistic Congress should be considered according to the Roman Ritual *De comunione et de cultu mysterii eucaristici extra missam* (1973) n. 109, “as a gathering (*statio*) to which a local church invites the other churches of the same region or of the same nation or of the whole world”.

## 2. Who can convoke a Eucharistic Congress?

The Holy Father convokes an International Eucharistic Congress at the place proposed by a local Ordinary (Bishop) or by an Episcopal Conference. Even Bishops can convoke diocesan or national Eucharistic Congresses in their dioceses or respective countries.

The Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses encourage, among other objectives, the celebration of national, diocesan, inter-diocesan and parish Eucharistic Congresses, which can possibly have an ecumenical and inter-religious dimension.

## 3. What are the ends of the Eucharistic Congress?

With the support of Episcopal Conferences and local bishops, national and diocesan delegates – and national committees, were set up – engage in fostering or taking those initiatives that, in accordance with the Church’s present norms, have the scope of increasing understanding and participation in the Eucharistic Mystery in all its aspects: from the celebration to worship *extra missam*, so that its influence permeates the whole of personal and social living.

## 4. What should be studied in preparing a Eucharistic Congress?

Documents needing to be studied in preparing a Eucharistic Congress are above all those of the Magisterium: the Instruction *De cultu mysterii eucaristici* (1967); the Roman Ritual *De comunione et de cultu eucaristico extra missam* (1973) nn. 110 - 111 and particularly the Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II *Ecclesia de Eucaristia* (2003). To express the particular features of every Congress it is indispensable to reflect on the pastoral applications of the basic text drawn up by the local committee.

## 5. What are the essential features that constitute the celebration of a Eucharistic Congress?

The Roman Ritual points out in no. 112 that the center of every Eucharistic Congress is the celebration of the Eucharist, the source and summit of the whole Christian life. The celebration of the word of God and talks can contribute to examining the various aspects of the Eucharistic

Mystery – aspects that are suggested by the theme of the Congress. The possibility of praying in common and of adoring the Blessed Sacrament in designated churches contributes to interiorizing these themes. Finally, Eucharistic processions can help to express a public and ritual dimension to the faith in the Eucharist, which is celebrated, reflected upon and re-affirmed during the Congress.

## **6. How long does a Eucharistic Congress last?**

According to needs, resources and circumstances, a Eucharistic Congress can take place for a day or last for many days. When resources are limited, many dioceses can unite in a common celebration to employ their resources in the most effective manner.

## **7. A follow-up to the Congress?**

To realize the fruits of a Eucharistic Congress it is indispensable to follow it up in dioceses and parishes through the committed endeavors of the permanent delegates working in collaboration with pastoral centers.

### **Articles and Documents**

#### **For study and discussion**

**(All are available in Spanish and English)**

#### *The Shape, Significance, and Ecclesial Impact of Eucharistic Congresses*

Presented by Archbishop Piero Marini, President of the Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, to the Irish Bishops' Conference (June 2009) in preparation for the 50<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress to be held in Dublin, Ireland (June 10-17, 2012).

<http://saltandlighttv.org/iec/what-is-a-eucharist-congress/>

#### *Ecclesia de Eucharista*

The Church draws her life from the Eucharist. Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 17 April, Holy Thursday, in the year 2003, the Twenty- fifth of my Pontificate, the Year of the Rosary. Pope St. John Paul II

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/special\\_features/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_20030417\\_ecclesia\\_eucharistia\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/special_features/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_20030417_ecclesia_eucharistia_en.html)

#### *Redemptionis sacramentum*

From the offices of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Rome, on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, 2004

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccdds\\_doc\\_20040423\\_redemptionis-sacramentum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20040423_redemptionis-sacramentum_en.html)

## *Mane Nobiscum Domine*

Pope St. John Paul II's Apostolic Letter beginning the Year of the Eucharist

[https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/2004/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_20041008\\_mane-nobiscum-domine.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2004/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20041008_mane-nobiscum-domine.html)

## *Sacramentum Caritatis*

The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Benedict XVI, the Eucharist as source and summit. Implications of a Eucharistic Spirituality.

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_exh\\_20070222\\_sacramentum-caritatis.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20070222_sacramentum-caritatis.html)

Basic Questions and Answers about the Real Presence (USCCB)

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/liturgy-of-the-eucharist/the-real-presence-of-jesus-christ-in-the-sacrament-of-the-eucharist-basic-questions-and-answers.cfm>

Pope Francis gives thoughts on Eucharistic Congresses at a Plenary Assembly November 10, 2018. <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-11/pope-francis-eucharistic-congress-plenary-assembly-budapest.html>

## **Activities and Formation for Children and Youth (adults too)**

A lesson plan on the real presence

<https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2017/07/teaching-real-presence/>

A resource guide of formats for celebrating Eucharistic Adoration with Children and Youth prepared for the 2012 International Eucharistic Congress in Ireland.

[https://www.xt3.com/files/dioceses/1028\\_FORMATS\\_for\\_EUCHARISTIC\\_ADORATION\\_\(1\).pdf](https://www.xt3.com/files/dioceses/1028_FORMATS_for_EUCHARISTIC_ADORATION_(1).pdf)

Numerous lessons, worksheets, activities on the Eucharist the Mass

<https://www.thereligionteacher.com/catholic-mass-activities/>

Transubstantiation Activity for high school youth

<https://www.avemariapress.com/engagingfaith/2008/11/transubstantiation-exercise/>

Busted Halo Sacraments 101: Receiving the Eucharist (3 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdGkTdv4Dt4>

Busted Halo Sacraments 201: What we Believe about the Eucharist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMSiHGTBdGk&t=107s>

Bishop Barron speaks on the Real Presence (11 minutes) Reflects on the Atlanta Eucharistic Congress

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJjW3LXuHzo>

Fr. Michael Schmitz, Motivation to go to Mass

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuyxQvb9Ayw>

Felician Sisters: 10 short videos from various sources:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLpOl5z7LF2sXLo6oWJnldiq8W2kQOswG>

Teaching Masses on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwgKyZwDRdU> (Fr. Ed Healey, Christ the King, Cape Cod)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxJW4AXwxyI&t=3s> (Diocese of Wichita, in Spanish)

### **Quotes on the Eucharist for Bulletins/announcements**

For you hear the words, 'the Body of Christ' and respond 'Amen.' Be then a member of the Body of Christ that your 'Amen' may be true. *Saint Augustine (Sermo 272)*

If we wish to appreciate the full nature of the Eucharist, in keeping with scripture and the fathers, we must begin by freeing ourselves from an individualistic understanding. This certainly does not mean that Communion is something other than personal fellowship and unity with Jesus Christ; but in the Bible, in the early Church, and in the tradition of the high Middle Ages, this fellowship and unity with Christ in the Eucharist are always seen in the larger context of the fellowship (*communio*) of the Church.

*Cardinal Walter Kaspar (Sacrament of Unity, page 118)*

Christ personally unites himself with each one of us, but Christ himself is also united with the man and the woman who are next to me. And the bread is for me but it is also for the other. Thus Christ unites all of us with himself and all of us with one another. In communion we receive Christ. But Christ is likewise united with my neighbor: Christ and my neighbor are inseparable in the Eucharist. And thus we are all one bread and one body. A Eucharist without solidarity with others is a Eucharist abused.

*Pope Benedict XVI (General Audience on December 10, 2008)*

The inexhaustible richness of this sacrament is expressed in the different names we give it. Each name evokes certain aspects of it. It is called: Eucharist, because it is an action of thanksgiving to God. The Greek words *eucharistein* and *eulogein* recall the Jewish blessings that proclaim - especially during a meal - God's works: creation, redemption, and sanctification. (CCC# 1328)

*The Eucharist and the unity of Christians.* Before the greatness of this mystery St. Augustine exclaims, "O sacrament of devotion! O sign of unity! O bond of charity!" (St. Augustine) The more painful the experience of the divisions in the Church which break the common participation in the table of the Lord, the more urgent are our prayers to the Lord that the time of complete unity among all who believe in him may return. (CCC#1398)

The Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the Church's life, for in it Christ associates his Church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father; by this sacrifice he pours out the graces of salvation on his Body which is the Church. (CCC#1407)

Because Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, he is to be honored with the worship of adoration. "To visit the Blessed Sacrament is . . . a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord" (Paul VI, *MF* 66). (CCC#1418)

In brief, the Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: 'Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking.' [St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 18, 5: PG 7/1, 1028.]" (CCC#1327)

The greatest love story of all time is contained in a tiny white Host. *Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen*

From the Eucharist comes strength to live the Christian life and zeal to share that life with others. *St. Pope John Paul II*

You must propagate veneration of the Most Blessed Sacrament with all your might, for the devotion to the Holy Eucharist is the queen of all devotions. *Pope Benedict XV*

Know also that you will probably gain more by praying fifteen minutes before the Blessed Sacrament than by all the other spiritual exercises of the day. True, Our Lord hears our prayers anywhere, for He has made the promise, 'Ask, and you shall receive,' but He has revealed to His servants that those who visit Him in the Blessed Sacrament will obtain a more abundant measure of grace. *St. Alphonsus Liguori*

The Eucharist is Jesus who gives himself entirely to us. To nourish ourselves with him and abide in him through Holy Communion, if we do it with faith, transforms our life into a gift to God and to our brothers. *Pope Francis* in a sermon on August 16, 2015

The following activity (which has 6 parts) is loosely based on an activity authored by Mary Ann Ronan when she served at St. Paul Catholic Church in Phoenix, Arizona. It can be done by families or groups independently. The parish needs to provide the reflection sheets and of course access to enter the church. This could be done all at the same time or in smaller increments. The sheets for each location in church should be placed near that place and visible.

## The Altar

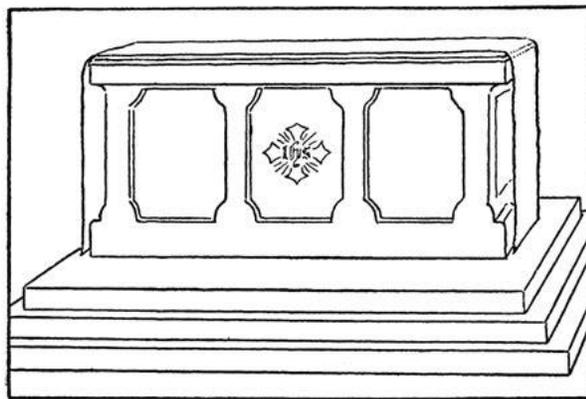
The word “altar” comes from the Latin word **altārium**, meaning "high," and also the Latin **adolere**, which means "to ritually burn or sacrifice," which suggests its early purpose as detailed in the Scriptures. In antiquity, the altar was more of a barbeque pit than a dining table---a place where living things were sacrificed, blood was spilled, incense and grain burned.

The Church gathers around the altar to celebrate the Eucharist. In this gathering, the altar represents two different aspects of the same mystery: the altar of sacrifice and the table of the Lord. The Christian altar is the symbol of Christ himself, present in the midst of the assembly, both as victim to atone for our sins as well as food from heaven to nourish and sustain us.

“For what is the altar of Christ if not the image of the Body of Christ?” asks St. Ambrose

To come to this table is to come to Christ. On the day of its dedication, the bishop sprinkled this altar with water, anointed it with Sacred Chrism, robed it in fine linens and set candles around it. This should sound familiar. On the day of our baptism, we were washed with water, anointed with oil, robed in fine garments, and entrusted with the light of a candle. We became Christians, “other Christs”, an altar of sacrifice, a banquet table for the hungry, the homeless. This consecrated altar stands here, Christ in our midst, center of our lives as Christians, our lives linked forever.

- † How is your life Christ’s? How is this altar your life?
  
- † What do you need to lay on it? What do you hold back from it?
  
- † You are invited to do some gesture of prayer that speaks of your relationship with Christ; with this altar.

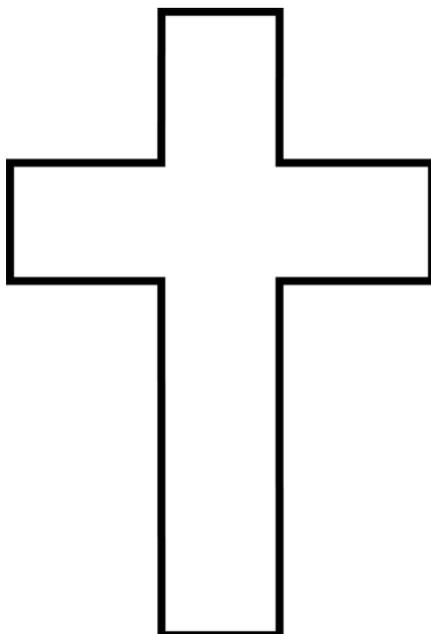


## The Cross

The most famous and widespread Christian symbol is the cross. It is found wherever there is a Christian presence. In Roman times, the cross was an instrument of torture and public humiliation, and criminals were put to death on crosses.

For Christians, the cross has become a symbol not only of Jesus' death, but also of his resurrection. While the cross has been around long before the advent of Christianity, the Easter story (that is, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ) has made the cross one of the most recognized icons in the world. The cross symbolizes sacrifice, suffering, repentance, solidarity, and exclusion. These are only a few ways to interpret the cross.

- † Stand near the foot of the cross as Mary and John. How does it make you feel?
- † Stand at a distance like the Roman soldiers. How does it make you feel?
- † Stand where those who might have been jeering would stand. How does it make you feel?
- † Kneel realizing the gift you have been given. How does it make you feel?
- † Prostrate yourself on the floor in the form of the cross. How does it make you feel?
- † What can you add in your own words to the following: Bless you, suffering, for being in my life. Bless you, \_\_\_\_\_ for being in my life.



## Genuflect/Bowing

From the Latin *genu flectere* and the Greek *gonu klinein*, “to bend the knee.”

- an attitude
- a gesture: involving, like prostration, a profession of dependence or helplessness, and therefore very naturally adopted for praying and for worship in general.

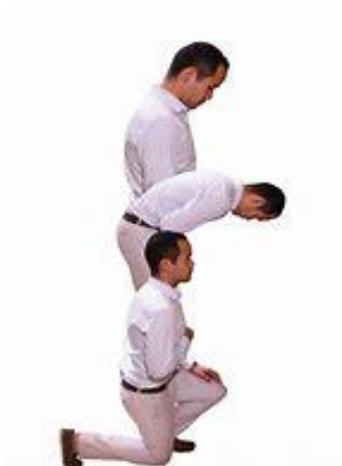
"The knee is made flexible by which the offence of the Lord is mitigated, wrath appeased, grace called forth" St. Ambrose.

The General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM) states, “A genuflection, made by bending the right knee to the ground, signifies adoration, and therefore is reserved for the Most Blessed Sacrament.” In general, we genuflect upon entering Church to the tabernacle where Christ is present and if the tabernacle is in the line of sight and also when we are exiting the Church. If the tabernacle is not visible, then a bow to the altar is used instead.

Ministers carrying candles or the cross bow instead of genuflecting.

There are several times during the liturgical year that a genuflection is part of the liturgy. An example would be on Good Friday.

A bow signifies reverence and honor shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them. There are two kinds of bows: a bow of the head and a bow of the body. A bow of the head is made when the Trinity is named together and when the names of Jesus, Mary or the saint of the Mass is named. A bow of the body (profound) is made during the Creed, “and by the Holy Spirit...” and a bow of the head before the reception of both the Body and the Blood of Jesus. (GIRM)



† Please go to the different parts of the church building. Bow or genuflect depending on the area.

† Who do you need to bow to or with?

† How does God speak to you when you genuflect and when you bow?

† Who in your family/neighborhood would it be hard for you to bow to or with? Why?

## The Liturgy of the Word

The main part of the Liturgy of the Word is made up of readings from Sacred Scripture together with chants that occur between them. The homily, Profession of Faith, and the Universal Prayer are also a part of the Liturgy of the Word. The readings are read from the ambo. Trained ministers proclaim the readings, but the Gospel is proclaimed by the deacon or priest. The reading of the Gospel is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word and that is illustrated by posture (standing) as well as by the singing of the Alleluia.

The arrangement of the readings is specifically designed to tell the story of Salvation History in a systematic way. It is preferable that the readings be read as scheduled for the day. Scripture readings are never replaced by non-biblical texts. (GIRM)

The Sunday readings consist of, in general, a reading from the Old Testament, a Psalm, a reading from the New Testament and a Gospel. When we listen to the readings, we are not hearing a story...we are engaging in a story in which we play an important role. Our role is to proclaim the Word of God out in the world. Hence, our response to the readings is “Thanks be to God” or I accept this mission. I will pray, study, live and be this Word in the world.

† Stand, sit, or kneel at the Ambo with the Word.

After spending some time there, go to a seat in a pew and pick up the readings for the coming Sunday. Read them slowly.

What word has been planted in you?

What does the reading call you to do?

Name it, pray on it.

† When you are ready, say a prayer. A sample would be: May the word I prayed tonight and will her proclaimed on Sunday find a home within me so that I may live it in the world, this week and always.



## The Body and Blood of Christ

When we hear “Body of Christ”, it is not only the consecrated bread that is being referred to. With God, there is always more. It is us, the Church as well. It is in this act of sharing, of being fed, and of being food that is contained in those three words. Our “amen” to these words is to accept a great mystery, that this bread, as ordinary as it may seem on the outside, has become Christ’s Body. I, as unworthy as I may be, receive it, am sustained by it, become a part of it and use it to build up the Body of Christ here on earth.

Another minister gives us the chalice and says, “Blood of Christ.” We hear in these words salvation, forgiveness, and our destiny changes us forever. And after I drink, another drinks and another until all have partaken. Our baptismal bond of dying to self and rising with Christ is renewed within us.

We are changed and transformed. The words of Jesus come to mind, “Do this in memory of me.” Do this and we do!

In the words of our patron, St. Augustine, *If you, therefore, are Christ's body and members, it is your own mystery that is placed on the Lord's table! It is your own mystery that you are receiving! You are saying "Amen" to what you are: your response is a personal signature, affirming your faith. When you hear "The body of Christ", you reply "Amen." Be a member of Christ's body, then, so that your "Amen" may ring true!* (Sermon 272)

† Please kneel, sit, prostrate yourself in front of the tabernacle.

Be in awe of the gift that Jesus wants to share with you, the intimate love that he offers you, who invites you to be Him in the world and for the world.

† What is it that you need in your own life to move deeper into this intimacy that Jesus wants with you?

† Name a particular action that you could do in order to more fully engage with this great gift of the Body and Blood of Christ. Write down action steps that you would need to make this action a part of your life. (could be daily devotion, Adoration, etc)



## Silence

*(please go to the chapel ---sit in a pew---let silence be on the inside as well as the outside)*

With God, there are different kinds of silence. There was the potent silence of God creating, the guilty silence of Adam and Eve when they were questioned about their behavior, and the utter silence of Good Friday when Jesus dies and is laid in the tomb.

We are silent before the Mass begins in order to be present to each other and to find God. God is always with us, but sometimes in our busy, noisy world, it is hard for us to hear God. We are silent when prayer is announced: “let us pray”, between the readings, after the homily, after Communion. Our sacred silence calls us to listen, to be open, to focus.

The Roman Missal tells us, “it is praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all might dispose themselves to carry out the celebration in a devout and fitting manner.

I need to learn silence in order that I might hear the voice of God.

I need to learn to sit in silence with others.

As a final thought, if we practice being silent, being silent together, being silent with God, then when our final hours approach we will be less afraid. For we know in practicing silence that death’s silence will be but a momentary hush before we join in the heavenly, “Holy, Holy, Holy.”

*Be still*  
and know  
that I am  
*God*

-PSALM 46:10

## Resource Books for Group/Individual Study

Binz, Stephen. *Threshold Bible Study: Eucharist*. Mystic, CT Twenty Third Publications, 2005. (study guide)

Fisch, Thomas, Ed. *Primary Readings on the Eucharist*. Collegeville, MN: Order of St. Benedict, 2004.

Fleming, Austin. *Preparing for Liturgy: A Theology and Spirituality*. Chicago, IL: Liturgical Training Publications, 1997.

Foley, Edward, O.F.M, Cap, *From Age to Age: How Christians Have Celebrated the Eucharist (Revised and Expanded Edition)* Collegeville, MN: Order of St. Benedict, 2008

Hahn, Scott. *Consuming the Word: The New Testament and the Eucharist in the Early Church*. NY: Crown Publishing 2013.

Hahn, Scott. *The Lamb's Supper: The Mass as Heaven on Earth*. NY: Random House, 1999.

Lukefahr, Oscar, C.M. *We Worship: A Guide to the Catholic Mass*. Liguori, MO: Liguori Press, 2004.

McKenna, John CIM. *Become What You Receive: A Systematic Study of the Eucharist*. Chicago, IL. Liturgical Training Publications, 2012.

Ostdiek, Gilbert, O.F.M. *Mystagogy of the Eucharist: A Resource for Faith Formation*. Collegeville, MN: Order of St. Benedict, 2015

Paprocki, Joe. *Living the Sacraments: Finding God at the Intersection of Heaven and Earth*. Chicago, IL: Loyola Press 2018.

Pitre, Brant. *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper*. NY: Crown Publishing, 2016 (has a study guide)

Richstatter, Thomas, O.F.M., S.T.D. *The Mass: A Guided Tour*. Cincinnati, OH: Franciscan Media, 2009

USCCB. *Book of Readings on the Eucharist*. Washington, D.C. U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, 2006 (Study guide)

USCCB. *Thirty-One Questions on Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament*. Washington, D.C. U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, 2005 (Study guide)