



49th INTERNATIONAL
EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS
QUEBEC CITY 2008

The Eucharist, gift of God for the life of the world.

An Introduction to the International Eucharistic
Congress prepared from its webpage.


CATHOLIC
CHRISTIAN
OUTREACH

This booklet was prepared by CCO Canada from
information on the website of International
Eucharistic Congress (www.cei2008.ca)

*Catholic Christian Outreach (CCO) is a university student
movement dedicated to evangelization. We challenge young people to live in
the fullness of the Catholic faith, with a strong emphasis on becoming
leaders in the renewal of the world.*

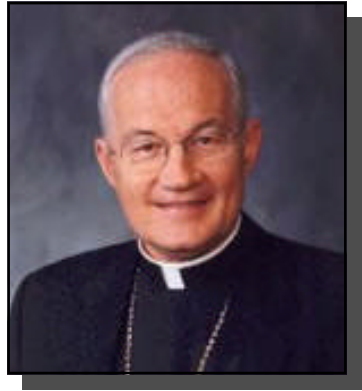
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WELCOME

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Website of the International Eucharistic Congress that will be held in Quebec from June 15th to June 22nd, 2008.

On October 17, 2004, our beloved Pope John Paul II confided the mission of organizing this great international gathering to our diocese. It will be an occasion for Catholics of the whole world to celebrate their faith in the Eucharist and to give witness to the Gospel by living moments of prayer, reflection and fraternity.



This Congress will be celebrated during the year that marks the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the city of Quebec as first permanent French establishment in America and the seat of the first Catholic diocese north of Mexico. During the many festivities of the year 2008, we will remember the women and men of faith who built a country and whose deep evangelical roots are still alive.

I hope many of you will come to the Congress and to the other civil and religious events that will be held during this special year. On this site you will find information that will allow you to take part in all these feasts and to prepare yourselves in prayer and reflection. I thank the people who contributed to its conception and all those who are working for the organization of the Congress.

As the first pastor of this diocese, I am particularly happy at the idea of living those moments with you. They will allow us to appreciate more deeply the gift that God has given of Himself to the life of the world. Today I invite you to pray for the spiritual success of this great project for the service of a new evangelization.

Marc Cardinal Ouellet

Archbishop of Quebec and president of the organizing committee.

A major event of Quebec 2008 celebrations

The year 2008 marks the 400th anniversary of Québec, the first permanent French establishment in America. This anniversary will be celebrated by important activities.

The arrival of the French in Québec City also marks the beginning of the Catholic Church north of Mexico because, from the start, people with strong faith settled here, to be joined shortly thereafter by the first Recollect and Jesuit missionaries and by the first religious congregations of women, the Ursulines and the Augustines.

The religious dimension will play an important role in the festivities of 2008 since the Catholic Church has played and still plays an essential role in the life of its people. In order that this religious aspect of festivities can meet with people of various interests and of all origins, our diocesan Church is planning a variety of activities throughout the year. Furthermore, an initial contact with the leaders of other Christian churches allows us the hope of organising activities of an ecumenical nature.

Highlight of Religious celebrations : the 49th International Eucharistic Congress (June 15 - 22, 2008)

With the support of the Conference of Catholic bishops of Canada, Québec's archbishop proposed to his Holiness that the 49th International Eucharistic Congress be celebrated in Québec city in 2008. This congress will constitute the most important religious event of 2008. Pope John-Paul II officially announced the holding of the Congress in Québec during his speech of October 17, 2004, which inaugurated the Year of the Eucharist.

The theme of the congress is : "The Eucharist, gift of God for the life of the world". As Cardinal Ouellet remarked "The Eucharist, as we receive it from the account of its institution, is evidence of the gift which the Son made of Himself for the multitude, a gift of love for the Father and for us, which seals the New Covenant . It can be seen also as the gift which the Father makes to the world of his only Son, incarnate and crucified, who gathered around His table the dispersed children of God. Finally, it is the gift of Trinitarian communion for the life of the world by the action of the Holy Spirit which assures the intimate participation of the faithful in this mystery of the Covenant. "

What is an International Eucharistic Congress

The first International Eucharistic Congress, held in France in 1881, was an assembly of 300 persons directing Eucharistic movements in European countries. During the 125 years that followed, congresses evolved strongly in form and now attract some 12,000 to 15,000 participants for one full week of celebration, adoration, catechism, cultural events, fraternal encounters, and involvement in favour of the needy. Public events, especially the closing Mass, attract considerable crowds. It should be noted that each congress is preceded by a theological and pastoral symposium to deepen understanding of an aspect of the Eucharistic Mystery.



Notre-Dame de Québec Basilica

The Statutes of the pontifical committee for International Eucharistic Congresses (1986) states :

"In preparing a congress, stress shall be laid on intense catechesis on the Eucharist as the Paschal Mystery of Christ... an active and conscious participation in the Liturgy... a careful choice of initiatives and the diligent carrying of social works in such a way that the Eucharistic table may be a sign of solidarity and sharing with the poor. " (art. 20)

The presence of the Pope at the closing of the Eucharistic Congress

Since 1881, the pope has always been represented by a special delegate at the celebration of Eucharistic Congresses. In 1964, Pope Paul VI took part in the final two days of the Congress held in Bombay, initiative which was repeated by his successor John Paul II during the congresses that followed.

We can therefore confidently hope that Benedict XVI will continue the tradition and that he will conclude the Eucharistic Congress of Québec. That will be a great joy and a moment of grace for our Church. Nevertheless, the presence of the pope should not make us forget that the centre of attention is the Eucharist, and that the pope is primarily a servant of the Eucharist, confirming by his presence the universal character of the event.

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF QUEBEC

Quebec, metropolitan and primate seat

«The mission of New France has as its boundaries in the east, the ocean, in the west and towards the north its limits are those of the continent; in the south, its neighbouring countries are New Holland and New England»

(Msgr. Laval to Pope Alexander VII, October 1660)

Quebec is the oldest episcopal seat in North America with the exception of Mexico. The first step of implementation of the Church in New France goes back officially to 1618 when the Recollets followed by the Jesuits in 1625 were permanently established in Quebec to serve the new colony and to evangelize the aboriginal tribes.

Originally having been a mission land depending on the Holy See, Quebec was established as an apostolic vicariate by a decree of the Propaganda approved by Pope Alexander VII on April 11, 1658. The same decree appointed François de Laval bishop of Pétrée and apostolic vicar for the kingdom of Canada in Northern America. The bulls of the new bishop of Pétrée were given in Rome on June 3 of the same year.

Sixteen years later the apostolic mission was raised to the rank of diocese, depending directly on the Holy See. Pope Clement X signed the bull of erection for the new bishopric on October 1, 1674. Msgr de Laval became the first bishop of Quebec and his diocese, bigger than Europe, was made up of all the territory over which France had rights and claims, that is to say all North America, minus the colonies of New England and Mexico.

The division of this immense diocese, under the English rule, led to the establishment of the first archdiocese of Canada. By a decision of Pope Pius VIII Msgr. Joseph-Octave Plessis received the title of Archbishop on January 12, 1819; however due to the hesitation of London, Quebec was not officially declared Archiepiscopate Seat until July 12, 1844 by Pope Gregory XVI. Quebec then had as suffragans the dioceses of Montreal, Kingston and Toronto. Today, after successive dismemberments that led to the formation of more than 150 dioceses, the Metropolitan seat of Quebec includes the Episcopal suffragans of Trois-Rivières, Chicoutimi and Ste-Anne-de-la-Pocatière.

On June 25, 1956, Pope Pius XII conferred the title of primate seat of Canada to the Metropolitan Seat of Quebec and that of primate of Canada to the Archbishop, pro tempore.

PRESENTATION OF THE LOGO

The logo is inscribed with a cross that separates into four parts the Eucharistic host, thus signifying the broken bread of the shared Eucharist, but also alluding to the four cardinal points of the earth.

The lines of the logo form a stylized representation of a boat, symbol both of the Universal Church and of Quebec, for it was by river that the faith was brought to Quebec.



The colours – gold and red – recall the bread and wine, together signifying God’s gift, the body and blood of Christ.

The curved white lines evoke both the waters of the river, and the water mixed with the Eucharistic wine.

The gold and red are also identified with Blessed Francois de Laval, founder of the Diocese of Quebec and first bishop of North America, as they are the colours of his coat of arms.

The depiction of a boat also makes a direct link to the activities surrounding the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Quebec.

In keeping with the theme of the Congress, the logo accentuates the life of the world, its roundness encompassing the universality of the gathering that will be brought together by this Congress.

WEBSITES ABOUT THE CONGRESS

For updated information about the Congress, go to:

www.cei2008.ca

For continued information about CCO’s activities related to the Congress, check out “CCO Events” at:

www.cco.ca

PRAYER FOR THE CONGRESS

On September 19th 2005, we were one thousand days from the inauguration of the 49th International Eucharistic Congress. We would like to recommend a prayer that will allow our communities to place the Eucharist at the centre of their lives.

Prayer for the “1000 days”

God our Father,
look with favour on your Church
as we prepare with hope and with joy
to celebrate the International Eucharistic Congress in 2008.

Help us to better welcome
the gift of your Son Jesus
in this memorial of his death and resurrection,
which nourishes our lives as your children
and as brothers and sisters.

Send forth your Holy Spirit
that we may better appreciate this gift,
and become messengers of the life brought by Jesus
to our world searching for meaning.

In following the example of Mary, woman of the Eucharist,
may we always give thanks to you,
and make a continual offering of ourselves
to respond to your love and fulfill your will.

We ask this through Christ, your Son, our Lord.
Amen.