

Eucharistic Congress & Pilgrimage

7 – 9 September 2018

The bishops of England and Wales will hold a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress in the Echo Arena, Liverpool, 7-9 September, 2018. Eucharistic Congresses are gatherings of clergy, religious and laity which promote an awareness of the central place of the Eucharist in the life and mission of the Church.

The Congress themes:

1. Eucharist
2. Adoration
3. Scripture
4. Ecclesiology – the Church
5. Formation
6. Music
7. Mission

These 7 themes all linked to the centrality of the Eucharist, provide a very rich reservoir of material for reflection and discussion. They can be adapted by parishes so that the prime focus remains at parish community level. The impact of this Congress needs to be absorbed and consolidated in each of our parishes and schools because that is where it matters to every individual person.

How do we respond to this Congress?

The Congress Away Team

Every parish in Southwark is invited to send 2 delegates to the Congress.

Every school in Southwark is invited to send 1 delegate to the Congress

Delegates are encouraged to form a Deanery Team linking up with neighbouring parishes. They become ambassadors for the project and will receive formation in preparation for the Congress experience.

The Congress Home Team

Every parish and school is invited to form a cluster of people to support the delegates in prayer and become conversation partners in practice. It would be good to select one or two of the themes for exploration before the Congress and discover how these particular themes can help us to understand our role, our ministry, our parish or school community, our mission as disciples of Jesus in today's world.

After the Congress in Liverpool – the Away Team will return with ideas, insights and suggestions around the 7 themes. Then we bring both teams together to hear the collective wisdom of the group. Together we discern a way forward and identify some pastoral building blocks for the future of for our parishes, schools, deaneries and diocese. This is an exciting and sacred project based on the centrality of the Eucharist.

What do we do now?

1. Encourage parishes and schools to select delegates for the Congress.
2. Ask our priests and head teachers to include the Congress in the Prayers of Intercession on Sunday - or school assembly – as frequently as possible beginning in Advent.
3. Start a conversation with others in the parish about the 7 themes and how - working together – we could explore their meaning and significance.
4. Extend the conversation to our neighbouring parish or school in the Deanery.
5. Spend some time in Adoration asking Jesus to bless and anoint the conversations.

Questions to ponder:

1. What do we want from this Congress?
2. What are the opportunities being created here?
3. How can we engage our parish / school in reflection and formation ?
4. Can we begin to name the building blocks of the Congress Legacy?

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH IN SOUTHWARK

Loving God, help us to be open to the freshness of your Spirit. Fill us with enthusiasm for the Good News. Invite us into a deeper relationship with your Son, Jesus, truly present in the Eucharist. Make us more aware of where there is need for new life. Help us to reach out to those who feel lost or abandoned, those who are searching and questioning, those who have walked away from you and those who are eager to know your love. We ask this through Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

Further Information:

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