



mission

magazine

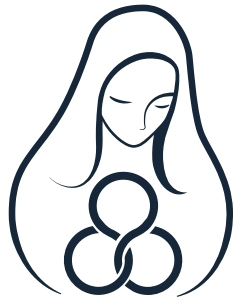
FALL 2024



EUCCHARISTIC AMAZEMENT:
Fr. Brady Williams

IN INDY AS IT IS IN HEAVEN:
Sr. Mary Claire Strasser

MISSIONARIES OF THE EUCHARIST:
Dcn. Ken Dawson



SOCIETY *of* OUR LADY
of the Most Holy Trinity

A message from the
**GENERAL
PRIEST
SERVANT**



The Treasure of the Eucharist

This past July, approximately 50,000 Catholics gathered in Indianapolis for the Eucharistic Congress. It was a spectacle of faith, a special time to adore and worship together, and to reflect on the sacred gift we have received in the Eucharist.

As a priest, there are many beautiful experiences in ministry. Every priest is privileged to participate in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ. Through the instrumentality of this participation, it is the Lord Himself who continues to minister to people in all times and places. It is a concrete and tangible way that Jesus fulfills His promise to “be with us always until the end of time.” I think it is fair to say that the high point of a priest’s life and ministry is the celebration of Mass. It is of great significance that we celebrate the Institution of Holy Orders and the Eucharist on the very same Holy Thursday every year. The two are inextricably linked together in their founding and celebration.

With respect to the Mass, there are two particular points that I would like to highlight. The first point is the inaudible prayer that the priest says as he mixes a drop of water into the chalice of wine at the offertory: “By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled Himself to share in our humanity.” This prayer beautifully summarizes the purpose of the Incarnation and of Mass. God became one of us in order to open a pathway for us to share in His life. In receiving the Eucharist, we receive the spiritual nourishment to continue the great work of our life – to become like Jesus to one day share fully in the life of the Most Holy Trinity in heaven.

The second point revolves around the offering which takes place at Mass. At the offertory, bread and wine are brought to the altar and the priest prepares the gifts for the offering. The rubric calls for the priest to raise the paten with bread and the chalice with wine just slightly above the altar. Moments later, following the



*Thousands gather
for adoration on the
streets of Indianapolis.*



Every priest is privileged to participate in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ.

invocation of the Holy Spirit and the words of institution, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Amazingly, our meager offering of bread and wine now becomes the offering of Jesus Christ on the Cross. The act of offering to the Father the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross culminates in the final doxology, ("Through Him, with Him, and in Him..."), where the priest now elevates high the sacred species because it is no longer just bread and wine, but the Body and Blood of Christ being offered. Through the generosity and love of God, our offering undergoes an astonishing transformation, from bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Jesus. I suppose it would be a little like riding a bicycle to Mass and when we return to our parking space afterward, a Ferrari is sitting there waiting for us in the same place (and even this analogy obviously falls woefully short of the exchange that takes place at Mass).

The two highlighted points summarize the

principal values of the Mass – it is a sacred banquet through which we receive the Body and Blood of the Lord; and, it is the offering to the Father of Jesus Christ on the Cross for the atonement of our sins. The Lord's Incarnation and Paschal Mystery are woven together in the sacred banquet and the saving sacrifice.

Returning to the Eucharistic Congress, among the 50,000 people present was a contingent of SOLT members. In this issue of the Mission Magazine, you will have an opportunity to hear about their experiences and reflections from this amazing event. May our faith in the Eucharist and its transformative power continue to grow and be manifested in our daily lives.

God bless.

FR. PETER MARSALEK, SOLT is originally from Burlington, Ontario. He currently serves as the General Priest Servant and resides in Corpus Christi, Texas.

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“In Indy as it is in Heaven”

One of the billboards around the convention center caught my eye as I walked towards Mass with Emma, one of our SOLT missionary volunteers, on the second day of the Eucharistic Congress, held in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 17-21, 2024. It made us laugh, but I found myself pondering its message throughout our time in Indianapolis.

During the Eucharistic Procession held on Saturday afternoon, I experienced this echo of heaven as I walked with hundreds of sisters and thousands of priests and bishops, while being cheered on by crowds of people on every side. The silence of Lucas Oil Stadium each night, with a crowd of 50,000 worshipping and adoring Our Lord present in Eucharistic Adoration, was a foreshadowing of heaven that became present to us.

The Congress began with Adoration and ended with Mass. It constantly oriented and reoriented our hearts to Jesus' presence in the Eucharist through the talks, music, displays on Eucharistic Miracles, relics, and so much more than we could possibly experience in five days. St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, where perpetual Adoration was held across the street from the convention center, was packed with people all day long. Jesus was truly the beginning, end, and center of each day.

There was a palpable joy and hope during these days of the Eucharistic Congress. In some ways, it imitated the reunion I often imagine heaven will be.

Twelve sisters, five priests, and many of our laity were able to enter into the gift of the Eucharistic Congress. It was a joy to be together, to be fed, and to be in awe of God at work. It was a gift to meet so many fellow attendees who had volunteered with SOLT or had been touched by the ministry of SOLT in some way. Beyond that, we were given a new zeal to proclaim the Gospel and the gift of the sacraments, particularly the Holy Eucharist. As we shared our graces after the Congress with each other, words like “unity,” “gift,” “spark,” and “fire” echoed through our reflections.

At the end of the Eucharistic Congress, a missionary mandate was given. As SOLT missionaries, this mandate resonated closely with our hearts. Cardinal Tagle, the Pro-Prefect for the Section of Evangelization of the Dicastery for Evangelization and Pope Francis' special envoy, said in his homily during the closing Mass: “Those who choose to stay with Jesus will be sent by Jesus. The gift of his presence and love for us will be our gift to people. We should not keep Jesus to ourselves. That is not discipleship. That is selfishness. The gift we have



Previous page: Crowds gather to worship our Lord in the Eucharist around the streets of Indianapolis.

Above: Sr. Claire and Mabelle Buegler at the SOLT booth; waiting for the keynote speaker.



received, we should give as a gift... what you have heard, touched, and tasted, you must share with others. We have received the gift of Jesus. Let us go to proclaim Jesus zealously and joyfully for the life of the world." I think we as SOLT could hear the heart of our founder, Fr. Flanagan, in his words.

Several people I spoke to during the Eucharistic Congress said that this Congress and time of revival will ignite (and has ignited) a fire in the Catholic Church to the same scale and impact as World Youth Day in Denver in 1993. St. John Paul II called that particular World Youth Day 'a revolution' for the American Church. Countless vocations, movements, and conversions can be traced back to that one graced event. Being in the initial kindling stage of this fire that has been lit at the Eucharistic Congress, I wonder what its fruits will be?

To the extent that we, personally and communally, respond to the graces poured out at this Eucharistic Congress, it will bear lasting fruit. As I served in the SOLT booth at the Congress, I encountered so many hearts open to the Lord's call and direction. In the weeks following the Eucharistic Congress, I have continued that conversation with a handful of young women. I have great hope that the seeds that were planted during the Eucharistic Congress will not only awaken but blossom into a new springtime for the Catholic Church in the United States. Springtime, as beautiful as it is, is also a time of hard work to bring things through to harvest. May the Holy Spirit, who has begun this beautiful work of revival, bring it to its full fruition.



SR. MARY CLAIRE OF THE HOLY FAMILY STRASSER is originally from Nashville, Tennessee. She first professed her vows in 2007 and currently serves as Vocations Servant in the American Region.



Above: SOLT Priests, Sisters and Laity hanging out by the exhibit hall.

Missionaries of the Eucharist

“Commit yourself to becoming a Eucharistic missionary, someone who lives deeply a Eucharistic life and having received that gift, allows themselves to be given as a gift.”

This is a quote from Bishop Cozzens at the closing of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. In his brief comments, he repeatedly exhorted us to share the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist with the world in service as we enter the final year of the National Eucharistic Revival – this year – the year of mission.

It’s no mistake that many of the teachings of our founder, Fr. James Flanagan, were echoed in this talk and many of the other talks and sessions during the congress. The themes of the primacy of the Eucharist in our lives, the role of Our Lady as the model disciple and intercessor for us, seeing all as gift and sharing our gifts, being friends with and walking with someone in need, and the missionary call of the Church, were consistently repeated throughout the week. We can see all of this reflected in the SOLT charism and in many of the teachings that are central to who we are – living Communion to Communion, Marian-Trinitarian spirituality, discipleship, graced friendships, order of gift, and the vision of bringing all people into communion with the Most Holy Trinity.

While this is encouraging, motivating, and maybe even comforting for those in SOLT to hear, we should also take this as a challenge. We have been prepared for this by our founder and all of the priests, sisters, brothers, and laity who are now, and have been, part of our community. And now, we are being called by the Church to go out and share our spirituality, our way of life, and our very selves with the world as part of this revival. To be clear, we’re not the only ones who have been prepared – countless other orders, societies, movements, apostolates, and individuals have been inspired by the Holy Spirit to serve the Church in this moment and have been given unique gifts to enable them to bring Christ to those who need Him. Mother Adela Galindo put it this way, “We were born for these times. It is our time to go out in haste ... like Our Lady, to a world that urgently needs to know God’s love and God’s truth.”

For the Lay Members of SOLT, this revival should serve as confirmation in your calling and provide renewed vigor in your life of service. Bishop Barron said that the laity are to “bring the lumen to the gentes, bring the Light of Christ out into the secular world.” So, while the universal call to holiness requires, perhaps demands, that we are active in leavening the temporal order – bringing the light of Christ into the workplace, the marketplace, the community, and our homes –



Above: The three SOLT Branches working together at the SOLT booth.

this revival also strengthens the missionary call of the laity. As members of a missionary community, SOLT Laity are often called to something deeper depending on their current circumstances, to seek out those who are hidden, lost, or forgotten, giving themselves in ministries and apostolates that are in need of people, resources, and energy. Energized by the model and companionship of Our Lady, they bring the love and truth of Christ to those who need Him most.

SOLT Family Mission Experience (SOLT FME), an apostolate that flows from the Lay Association of SOLT, is a tangible fruit of this time of revival. Starting in the latter part of 2023, year 2 of the National Eucharistic Revival, we have spent the last 10 months building the foundation for this apostolate to grow and invite many families to serve in mission together as a family. Our mission experiences invite the family into the life of the mission – spirituality, community, and service. Daily Mass is the cornerstone of everything we do and is where we are sent out to serve. By reflecting each day on the Mass readings for the next day, each person – parents and kids – see how God is working in their lives as they serve each day. The meals and sharing each evening, give us time to get to know each other and encounter Christ in those we serve alongside. All of this prepares

their hearts not just for service the following day in mission, but also for a change that the missionary families take home with them – a new or renewed missionary zeal that can change their family, parish, and community.

SOLT Family Mission Experience is ready to support the Church in this call to missionary service – a call for everyone, even families. With the Church in the US focused on being Eucharistic Missionaries this year (and hopefully beyond), SOLT FME is uniquely positioned to provide powerful eucharistic missionary experiences for any and all families. SOLT FME is seeking out more partnerships with dioceses and schools, offering them a tangible way to activate the missionary spirit of their families and provide a structured, proven way for them to serve. In our mission trips we will continue to be very intentional about our focus on encountering Christ in the Eucharist while on mission, and to be a visible sign that in the Eucharist we are sent out to serve those in need. God willing, SOLT Family Mission Experience will provide a valuable service to the Church, empowering families to serve during this year of mission and bring that newfound missionary zeal back home with them. In the words of Mother Adela, “Let us go as missionaries, like Our Lady – missionaries of the Eucharist.”



DEACON KEN DAWSON currently serves as Regional Lay Servant for the North American Region and as Mission Servant for SOLT Family Mission Experience



Eucharistic Amazement in Indianapolis



The end of May 2024, the St. Juan Diego route of the National Eucharistic Procession passed through Corpus Christi, Texas, and the Eucharistic pilgrims stayed at Our Lady of Corpus Christi Retreat Center. They were still fresh – only a week from their initial departure from Brownville, TX. It was really an honor to have them stay with us and I sensed that these pilgrims carried us with them on their two-month journey to Indianapolis for the Eucharistic Congress. Having Jesus process through our towns and city stirred up something in people. Even though the crowds that came to the events were moderate in size, there was a sense that Jesus was at work in many hearts as He walked by their homes and businesses.

Nothing could have prepared me for the culmination of the Eucharistic processions coming from the four corners of the United States at the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis (July 17 – 21, 2024). I flew from Houston, TX on the morning of Wednesday, July 17 on a plane that was at least half full of priests, seminarians, deacons, and parish staff from various dioceses in

Texas and Louisiana. The passengers were really chatty – so unlike typical flights where everyone is engaged on their cell phone. That in itself was a sign that hearts were ready for something incredible.

Although I wish I could describe in great detail everything that happened there, I would like to try and capture some of the most significant movements of the Congress through the lens of a liturgist. Having a licentiate degree in liturgy, I tend to view things from that point of view. Each evening at the Eucharistic Congress, there was a time of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Lucas Oil Stadium called Revival Sessions. The spotlights would focus on Jesus on the altar in the middle of the stadium and almost all 50,000 people would be there to adore Him. As each of the nights progressed there was a more profound, prolonged time of silence with Jesus. The first night there was a lot of praise and worship music but by the last night there was a hush. It reminded me that it takes a significant amount of time to quiet the soul so that the Holy Spirit

Above: Thousands of catholic faithful gather to listen to the MCs and keynote speakers.

praying with us and in us with groanings too deep to understand can be perceived. Much of the thrust of the Congress was to help us encounter Jesus in Eucharistic amazement. He is “God with us” and our hearts burst into cries of “stay with us.” The Eucharistic liturgies, Adoration, and the incredible Eucharistic procession through the city streets rejuvenated our hunger and thirst for the presence of the Lord. As well, the liturgical beauty that was exhibited during the Congress I believe revived in clergy and laity alike the *ars celebrandi* (art of celebrating), the ‘liturgical sense’ that has been called for by the last three Popes.

However, for the Congress to be a real Eucharistic revival, something more was needed, and this thread was interwoven throughout the event: the Eucharist leads us to mission. Cardinal Pierre, the Papal Nuncio, invited us to see the presence of Jesus in every face. Fr. Mike Schmitz and Sr. Josephine Garrett called us to repentance, which leads us to greater love for God and our neighbor. Repentance will be the catalyst for us to go out with boldness to bring Christ to others. The testimonies of the many of the speakers concerning the healing power of the Eucharist impels us to be instruments of Christ’s peace and healing presence in the world. The Eucharist can not be a private affair. The Congress beckoned all present to “Go forth ...” with the power and strength of His presence.

Essentially, we are being called to be Eucharistic missionaries. As our Founder, Fr. James Flanagan would repeatedly tell us: “live from communion to communion!” Beginning with our communion with Christ in the Eucharistic banquet we are sent out as ‘agents’ of communion: bringing the peace of Christ, the healing of Christ, the truth of Christ, the teaching of Christ, bearing the sufferings of Christ, etc. We then return back with the fruits of our labor to give thanks to God and be renewed



Hanging out at the SOLT booth with some friends.

in spirit. St. Patrick perhaps describes well the impact the Eucharist can have in each of us which then radiates out in our service of others:

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me. - St. Patrick's Breastplate

All of us who attended the Eucharistic Congress are still in the after glow of that encounter with Christ and with so many of our fellow Catholics. Truly, a revival has begun that, like a mustard seed that has been planted will take deep root in the Church in the United States and grow into something astoundingly great. In a way, the Eucharistic pilgrimages did not end in Indianapolis. Rather, they really galvanized a larger force and sent us out to be Eucharistic missionaries.



FR. BRADY WILLIAMS, SOLT serves as the Secretary of the SOLT American Region Council.



Spouses of Christ in Indiana

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith."

Hebrews 12:1-2

How to put into words the powerful experience of the National Eucharistic Congress? What adjectives could serve to encompass the incredible drama that unfolded in Indianapolis? Perhaps if I just share one afternoon in particular, you might have a tiny glimpse of how the Lord unveiled His Heart 'in a cloud of witnesses' and sent us off with a renewed sense of mission and the desire to persevere.

We had gathered that afternoon as Religious Brothers and Sisters in Hall F of the Indiana Convention Center at 2:30 pm. The Eucharistic Procession was set to begin at 3 pm. We were filled with joy as we greeted one another and there was a strong sense of comradery among us. As we left Hall F, I could hear cheering and applause. I turned to my right. There gathered together were thousands of Priests who were waiting in the hall, almost as if they were holding the door and thanking us as we passed. I was humbled to accept their praise, yet I knew that



Above: Posing together waiting for the procession to begin;

On the Side: Eating lunch under a tent by the Adoration Chapel; Sr. Mary Emmanuel visiting with some friends;



*Above: Sr. Mary Elizabeth Albers visiting with a friend;
In the procession with our sisters in Christ;*

our witness as Spouses of Christ gives them courage and speaks to their hearts without uttering a word, "Continue forward our Brothers! You are 'in persona Cristi' - CCC 1548. Without you, there is no Eucharist!" A few more steps and we beheld Bishop Andrew Cozzens himself, who waved and nodded cheerfully as we passed by. We then turned and processed out into the bright sunshine onto Capitol Avenue. Hundreds and thousands of people were clapping and cheering and waving. "Thank you Sisters! Thank you for your service! We love you Sisters!" I was overwhelmed. Tears gathered and I could only bow my head. It has been God's grace alone any of us have heard His call and persevered. Our vocation is a gift and I don't believe any of us wanted the praise, and yet it was being lavished upon us.

We turned onto Meridian Street only to discover over a thousand more people packing both sides of the street. Straight ahead we could see the magnificent Soldiers and Sailors Monument and its steps gave the impression that the people were standing on the bleachers of a stadium, again, shouting and clapping, "Thank you Sisters! We love you Sisters!" I so badly wanted to grab my phone and document the moment, but I held back. I am so accustomed to taking photos and videos for Instagram, but in that moment, I wanted to just soak it in and hold it in my memory. We were truly being surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. Throughout the week I met so many holy and wonderful lay men and women; families and coworkers in the vineyard. All of us striving for holiness. All of us longing for union with our Lord. All of us gathered that afternoon to adore Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist. What a powerful moment of union with the Body of Christ! The experience of the Eucharistic Congress left me so encouraged and so much desiring to 'rid [myself] of every burden of sin that clings to [me], and persevere in running the race that lies ahead.' I was renewed in the sense of mission that we have been given together as a Church and I look forward to 'running the race that lies ahead', with all of you dear friends and family of SOLT. Let us continuously keep our eyes on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of our faith.



SR. MARY EMMANUEL SCHMIDT, SOLT serves as the SOLT Regional Sister Servant.



Above: Fr. Dave Brokke sharing a hug with the laity.



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On the front cover: 50,000 gather at
Lucas Oil Stadium to praise God.

Right: Sr. Emmanuel and Sr. Aloysius visiting
booths at the Eucharistic Congress.



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