

the words, *Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord, or Go in peace, glorifying the Lord with your life.* We are reminded to go back to our homes, to our neighbours, to our places of work and to live out what we have experienced at Mass. The Christian community and every Christian is called to be “the salt of the earth”, and “the light of the world”.

As you are all aware, the 50th International Eucharistic Congress will take place in Dublin from June 10th -17th this year. This will be an historic moment in the life of our Church in Ireland. Last November, the Eucharistic Congress Bell travelled through the length and breadth of our diocese, calling us to renew our commitment to the Eucharist. We are all invited to celebrate the Eucharistic Congress by participating in the Eucharistic Congress activities, either in Dublin or in our own parishes and pastoral areas.

Let us hope and pray that during the coming International Eucharistic Congress, we will all deepen our understanding and appreciation of the Mass, and respond generously to the instruction of Jesus to his followers at the Last Supper: “Do this in memory of me”.

+ Bill Murphy



Eucharistic 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 recognise 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.

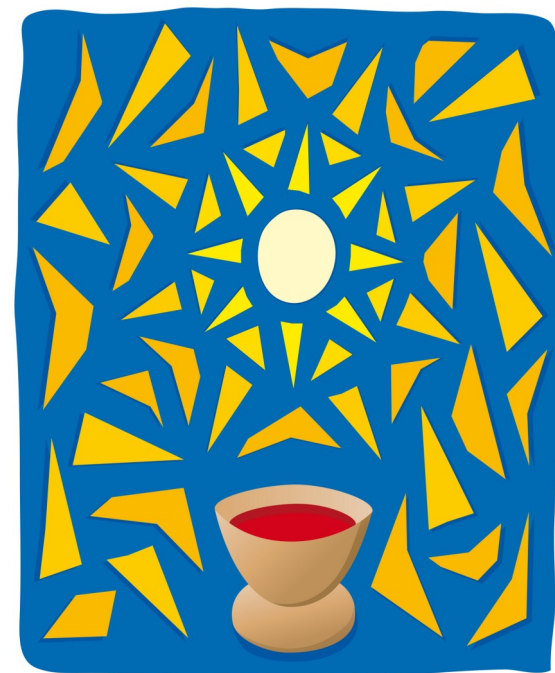
In communion with Mary,
whom you gave to us as our Mother at the foot of the cross,
through you may all praise, honour and blessing be
to the Father in the Holy Spirit and in the Church,
now and forever.

Amen

www.dioceseofkerry.ie

Diocese of Kerry

Living the Eucharist *Do this in memory of me*



Pastoral Letter
Lent 2012



Dear Friends,

We are living in challenging times. The economy of our country is in crisis and this has a daily impact on all our lives. Many families are living with unemployment, and many people are facing emigration. The change for families and communities throughout the country is a cause of great concern, as it can leave people with a feeling of powerlessness and hopelessness. Many people also feel alienated from the Church which afforded them and their ancestors comfort and hope in difficult times in the past.

As Christians, our hope and our future is in Jesus Christ. In our times of hopelessness and darkness, we might remember Jesus' Good Friday. It seemed like the most hopeless of all days and yet hope came from it. So we know that God, who can roll away the stone from the tomb, can roll away the stones that imprison us and restore light to our lives. We are assured too that the ultimate stone of death holds no fear for us as Jesus has conquered death, not just for himself, but for all who follow him.

All who follow him! This is a huge challenge to us today. Following Jesus is a challenge, because his whole life was one of giving himself unselfishly to others and to the Father. When Jesus lived among us, he was found among the religious and the sinners, he spent time with prostitutes and prophets. He healed those who were sick, welcomed sinners, and cared for the lost and the lonely. Even when tortured, he never lost faith in God, and his prayer was for those who were torturing him – “Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do”. This was extremely challenging for the disciples, yet they followed him. They were attracted by him and wanted to live like him.

You might say that was easy for them. They were in daily contact with Jesus, and he taught by word and example how to relate to God and to other people. But that was 2000 years ago. What about now? Do I want to live like Jesus Christ today? Am I attracted by the kind of person he was, and if so, how do I meet Jesus today? There are different ways to meet Jesus today, for example in the Scriptures, in the poor, in those who live a Christian life, but the principal way of meeting Jesus is in the celebration of the Mass, the Eucharist. The Risen Jesus gathers us as his followers; he speaks to us through the readings; he unites us with his offering of his

life and death to the Father; he feeds us with his Body and Blood, and then he sends us out to be his hands and feet in the world.

It is in the Eucharist that Jesus gives us his Holy Spirit so that we can pattern our life on his life, and live in communion with God and with one another. In giving us the Eucharist, he shows that our God is a God who wants to be close to us, his people, to have a really close, intimate relationship with us. Jesus shows us that our God is a God who comes to us, his people, who visits us in Jesus his Son, our Lord. Jesus is the face of God.

The Eucharist or Mass is not simply an empty ritual that we celebrate once a week. The Eucharist that we celebrate on Sunday is to be lived out every day of the week. At Mass we have heard and experienced Good News; we have experienced the love and the intimacy of the Lord; we have offered ourselves with him in his self-giving to the Father; we have been united with our sisters and brothers in the Christian community. Now we are sent to share all these riches with others and to pattern our lives on his life. So at the end of Mass, we are sent on a mission, with