

The Ark of the New Covenant

Guide



**49TH INTERNATIONAL
EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS
QUEBEC CITY, CANADA 2008**

Contents of the file

— GUIDE —

INTRODUCTION.....	2
1. Presentation of the International Eucharistic Congress (IEC).....	3
2. The Ark of the New Covenant.....	6
2.1 Presentation.....	6
a) The origin of the Ark.....	6
b) Link between the objectives of the Eucharistic Congress and the Ark of the New Covenant.....	6
c) The artists - the committee.....	6
- the artist Alain Rioux.....	7
d) The icons.....	8
2.2 Description of the Ark and its Symbols.....	8
a) The meaning of the name.....	8
b) The eight icons chosen for the Ark.....	10
c) The base of the Ark.....	11
d) The angels in adoration.....	12
e) The ship's hold, a space for Eucharistic commitment.....	12
f) The journey of the Ark.....	12
3. Ideas for Activities.....	13
3.1 Three components.....	13
3.2 The Ark, a symbol which takes us to the heart of the six presences.....	13
3.3 The Eucharistic charter.....	15
4. Use your creativity.....	21
5. Contact us.....	21
Contents of the "Appendices".....	22

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Guide



Introduction

The Ark of the New Covenant marks a first in the history of the International Eucharistic Congresses. It is an original symbol that will nourish the spiritual preparation of this unique event for the Canadian Church in the 21st century.

Three objectives have gone into the spiritual preparation for this type of congress

- Promote Eucharistic catechesis
- Encourage fully active and conscious participation in liturgy
- Take another step towards greater human solidarity.

Indeed, the Ark was created with these objectives in mind. We hope you will reflect on them and incorporate them as much as possible into all your activities, whether they are short or long.

The Ark begins its pilgrimage in May 2006. We are fully confident of the strong creative response it will evoke throughout its journey. All those who put this document together welcome any suggestions you might have for improving it. This exciting adventure is just beginning and we invite you to embark on it with us.

This activities document is not intended as a final version. We hope you will use the tools and ideas it presents as a starting point for enhancing our symbolic understanding of the Ark of the New Covenant.

Let us now put out into deep water and pay out our nets without fear!



Sister Doris Lamontagne, PFM
IEC Associate General Secretary

- ▶ Our thanks go to all the people who have worked on this document to date, in particular, Camille Jacques, Servite of Mary. Many of the elements in the file stem from his reflections, liturgical skills and Biblical knowledge.

1. **Presentation of the International Eucharistic Congress (IEC)** ***A time for reflection in the Church***

The celebration of the 2008 International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec City will be an exceptional opportunity for profound reflection on the meaning of the Eucharist in the lives of Catholics and in the life of the world. This event has for its backdrop the 400th anniversary of the founding in the seventeenth century of North America's first French-speaking city, which would become an important hub of missionary activity for the entire continent. The International Eucharistic Congress is being held in Quebec City from June 15-22, 2008 under the theme : *The Eucharist, Gift of God for the Life of the World.*

The occasion for a dialogue between faith and culture

Celebrating a reality like the Eucharist through an official event is not as easy as it may seem in today's world. This is especially true for the International Eucharistic Congress, which has a public dimension and a message of good news for the world. Such a gathering cannot take place unless we work ceaselessly to renew the dialogue between faith and contemporary culture.

A life-giving theme

The theme chosen for the congress, "The Eucharist, Gift of God for the Life of the World," refers to the gift that God has given to a humanity seeking life in its fullness. But what kind of gift is it? It is a gift of the Trinity.

First, it is the gift of the Son by God the Father. We read in the Gospel According to Saint John: "*For this is how God so loved the world: he gave his only Son*" (Jn 3: 16). In the last three years of his life, Jesus of Nazareth made himself known in many ways. This gift, the sign of his love for humanity, is revealed in all its truth in the hour of his death.

We are given the full meaning of Jesus' gift in what he says the night before his death: "*This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me ... This cup is the new covenant in my blood.*" (cf. Lk 22: 19-20; Mt 26: 26-28; Mk 14: 22-24; 1 Cor 11: 23-25).

A few days after this tragic death, the disciples witness the resurrection of their Lord, Jesus Christ, and they recognize him as the Messiah, the Christ. At the hour of Pentecost, the disciples receive the Holy Spirit.

It is because of the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples, and especially because of his resurrection that the Church has to this day been receiving the gift of the Trinity which comes from God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



The preparation of the congress, like the congress itself, is a time that will allow us to deepen our reflection on what has sustained God's people throughout their 2,000 year pilgrimage. We now submit the theme for the congress to the prayers and reflection of the participants who will be coming together in Quebec City in 2008, and to all persons seeking to rediscover the mystery of faith and its meaning for their lives.

The echo of God's gift resounds through history in the lives of its witnesses

By following Christ, we accept the gift of God and bear witness to that gift through our commitment to transform the world by concrete and meaningful action. Over the past 2,000 years, countless numbers of people have given their lives as witnesses of the Gospel throughout the world and are a source of inspiration to us today.

It is fitting that we use the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City as an opportunity to commemorate all those who have shaped our history. Quebec City is the cradle of faith in North America and we keep within us today the memory of all the missionaries of New France. This celebration is therefore also an opportunity to show how much we continue to benefit from the rich heritage of faith they have bequeathed to us.

Quebec City, the host of the 49th International Eucharistic Congress, has for its motto "***Don de Dieu, feray valoir***" (I shall put God's gift to good use). Samuel de Champlain was sailing in a ship called *Don de Dieu* when he founded Quebec City in 1608. His ship's name is commemorated in the coat of arms and flag of Quebec City. Our call to commemorate the past is also seen in the motto of the province of Quebec: *Je me souviens* (I remember).

But the memorial celebrated in the Eucharist is more than a memory of the past. Through the resurrected Jesus, the Church is brought into the presence of the Eucharist each time it remembers the gift of God, which is faithfulness to his word: *Do this in remembrance of me*.

This act of remembering is itself closely tied to the profound nature of the Church: "*The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you*" (Jn 14: 26). This act of memory by the Church directly echoes the act of memory by God himself, who is faithful to his Word and to his plan for his Covenant with humanity. As the Virgin Mary tells us, God is "*mindful of his faithful love*" (Lk 1: 54). Also before returning to his Father, Jesus tells her: "*I am with you always; yes, to the end of time*" (Mt 28:20) The Eucharist that Jesus himself instituted is one of the signs of this living and permanent presence of the Resurrection in humanity.



The gift we hold within our hands

A unique rendezvous with history is being offered to us through the celebration of Quebec City's 400th anniversary and even more with the celebration of the 49th International Eucharistic Congress. What kind of event will this congress be for us? It will surely be a special occasion to renew our ties with our religious history. We remember that this history has taken root through the witness of men and women who gave their lives and their blood for the love of Jesus Christ, God's gift to the world. In following after them, many of our ancestors wrote new pages to add to the religious history that we know today. And we are about to write new pages of our own. How will we do it? Let us be guided by the Holy Spirit, who calls us to this voyage and who continues to call us to bear witness to the Kingdom of Heaven in today's world. Let us be authentic witnesses through which the Good News can reach every corner of the world.



2. The Ark of the New Covenant

2.1 *Presentation*

a) Origin of the Ark

The preparations for the International Eucharistic Congress got underway with a Youth Summit held in May 2005. The participants at this initial mobilization of youth enjoyed a weekend of renewal and discussions. At the summit, the first in the lead-up to the congress, they also noted how the Cross of World Youth Day had been used and expressed the desire to produce a symbolic object which could travel the country to prepare the way for the congress.

A committee of youth from Quebec City and Montreal was mandated to develop this idea. Following its reflections, the committee recommended to the IEC Steering Committee that it consider using an original artistic work as part of the preparations for the congress.

b) Link between the objectives of the Eucharistic Congress and the Ark of the New Covenant

This artistic creation will expand the horizon of our understanding of the Eucharist and will serve as the springboard for a wide variety of activities related to the three main objectives of the Eucharistic Congress:

- Promote Eucharistic catechesis as the Paschal mystery of Christ.
- Encourage fully active and conscious participation in the Liturgy through the hearing of the Word of God, the offering itself and the sense of brotherhood in the community.
- Take another step towards greater human solidarity through the commitment to transform the world by concrete actions as a sign of the Kingdom in the heart of today's world.

c) The artists

▪ the design committee

Following the Youth Summit in 2005, a committee made up of young adults from Montreal and Quebec City was given the mandate to design the religious symbol that would serve to prepare the way for the Congress. The members of the committee were: Véronique Rondeau, Chantal Laure Faneus, Marie-Dave, Clément Laffitte, Jean-Francis Clermont-Legros, Guylain Roussel, Dominique Vandal, Sister Cécile Gagné, RHSJ, Sister Doris Lamontagne, PFM, Father Robert Gendreau, Camille Jacques, OSM, and Valérie Cloutier.



The committee's proposal was enthusiastically received by the organizing committee which is helping Cardinal Marc Ouellet to establish the main orientations of the IEC. The organizing committee enriched the proposal by adding a number of themes, including that of the angels in adoration. The name finally chosen was ***The Ark of the New Covenant***.

- ***Artist – Alain Rioux of Quebec City***

Wood sculpture as a spiritual journey

Alain Rioux is a 45-year-old artist from Quebec City. This self-taught carpenter and sculptor works out of his home in Ancienne-Lorette. He met his wife-to-be, Chantal Dubois, during a visit by Pope Jean-Paul II to Quebec City in 1984. Alain and Chantal have two children.

Alain grew up in a family of carpenters, who introduced him to carpentry when he was a young boy. But at the same time, he became interested in the visual arts. Through such media as painting, drawing, modeling and photography, he explored and developed his talents. Alain always had a workspace that would allow him to give full reign to his imagination. As a young adult, he started a small woodworking business. Customers also sought his talents in a variety of areas, including the production of background decor, advertising signs and to-scale models. He later completed a year of visual arts studies.

One day in 1994, while working as a teacher, Alain went to his studio to make a sculpture of the Virgin to guide him in his prayers. It was through this work that he rediscovered his love of wood sculpture, which he had put aside. It also led him to Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, where a sculptor agreed to give him a few lessons.

On March 19, 1995, he began a one-year training program at the École-Atelier de sculpture de Québec in Limoilou. In April 1996, he started up his own company, *Art 3D Alain Rioux enr.*, with a small room in his apartment as a studio. He has created various sculptures, including several with religious themes. He has also made liturgical furnishings such as vigil lights, prayer benches, crosses, altars, ambos, tabernacles, monstrances, statuary pedestals, and so on.

September 2005 saw the start of the project for the Ark of the New Covenant. Alain made designs of the work and began sculpting it in the winter of 2006. The construction of this symbolic ark represents his desire to serve the Church in a meaningful way and to explore new artistic challenges. It is the crowning achievement of Alain's ten years as a professional artist.

Alain Rioux- Carpenter/sculptor
Art3dalainrioux@bellnet.ca



d) The icons

How the icons were selected – A story of collaboration with Marc Lepage

Marc Lepage is a man who lives life with passion! He has been more than able to juggle his time as a spiritual life coordinator with his community and humanitarian involvement. He works full-time in a high school on Quebec City's south shore and has participated in missionary projects overseas.

Humanitarian aid has long been one of Marc's interests. In 1999, during a stay in Romania with a group of young students, he fell in love with the country and its people. Since that time, every year for three to four months, he has been devoting his time to a Romanian orphanage, the Casa de Copii Sfanta Maria. This orphanage, which is run by the Oblate Sisters of the Assumption, is home to more than 100 children.

This orphanage and others with which Marc regularly collaborates receive funding for their operations through the sale of icons produced by Romanian Orthodox monks. The profits from these sales are supporting these orphanages in their commitment to help the children under their care.

In developing the concept for the Ark, the committee was deeply moved by the beauty and simplicity of these icons. It chose them because part of the mission of the Eucharistic Congress is to demonstrate international solidarity. In addition, helping to fund the humanitarian work of these orphanages was seen as being very much a part of the missionary work to which we are called by the Eucharist.

2.2 Description of the ark and its symbols

a) The meaning of the name: The Ark of the New Covenant

The chest of the Ark of the Covenant

The word "ark" comes from the Latin word "arca," itself a translation of the Hebrew word "arôn", which means "chest." The Ark of the Covenant (i.e., chest) was kept in a large tent and served both as a seat and a container.

The Ark of the Covenant, also known as the Ark of Witness, is mentioned more than 200 times in the Old Testament. It was at one and the same time the throne of the God of Israel and a reliquary.¹ This reliquary, or chest of gold, contained the proof of the Covenant that God had made with his people,

¹ As described in *Exodus* (cf. *Ex* 25: 10-21; 37: 1-9), the Ark of the Covenant was a rectangular chest made of acacia wood. Its dimensions were given in cubits (2.5 x 1.5 x 1.5). A cubit was a form of measurement used in Egypt and other Near East countries, but its value was not exactly the same throughout the region. In metric terms, the chest was approximately 1.10 m. to 1.30 m. in length and approximately 0.70 m. to 0.80 m. in both width and height.



the two tables of the Law that Moses received from God at Mount Sinai (cf. *Dt* 10: 1-8) and which he broke when he saw that the people had made a golden calf (cf. *Ex* 32: 19).

The Ark as a symbolic boat

The base of the Ark is in the form of a boat. It brings to mind Noah's Ark, the vessel that God commanded Noah to build. And it was this ark which, thanks to the provisions it contained, saved Noah and his family, as well as two of every species of living animals from the Flood (cf. *Gn* 6: 18-22).

The New and Everlasting Covenant

The term "New Covenant" refers to the New and Everlasting Covenant made possible by the coming of Jesus and marked by the Paschal Mystery of his death and resurrection, as celebrated in the Eucharist. The Ark of the New Covenant invokes for us the spiritual experience of the people of Israel and the covenant they made with God through Moses on Mount Sinai, as described by the Old Testament. But more importantly, as we read in the New Testament, it symbolizes, in concrete manner, the life of Jesus and the New Covenant that he instituted through his death and resurrection.

Saint Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant / A Marian symbol

The name "Ark of the Covenant" was given to the Virgin Mary,² mother of Jesus, for various reasons.

Just as in the Old Testament the Ark of the Covenant was enveloped by the shrouded glory of God, so too in the New Testament is the Virgin Mary, the Ark of the Alliance, inhabited by God at the Annunciation: "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God*" (cf. *Lk* 1: 35).

We read in the Old Testament that the Ark of the Covenant was transported from Baal of Judah (*Baalé-Yehouda*) to Jerusalem and that it was met with joy and blessings of the people as it passed. But we also read: *That day David felt afraid of Yahweh. "How can the ark of Yahweh come to be with me?"* (*2 Sam* 6: 9).

We then read in the New Testament that after the Annunciation (cf. *Lk* 1: 26-38), Mary hastens to the town of her cousin Elizabeth in the hill country of Judah. Elizabeth greets her with words that recall David's response to the coming of the Ark to Jerusalem: "*Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord?*" (*Lk* 1: 43).

² See, for example, the various Marian litanies, including the XVIth century *Litanies of Loreto*.



**b) *The eight icons chosen
for reflection on the mystery of the Covenant***

At the top of the Ark of the New Covenant are large icons which represent the various moments in the Paschal Mystery, or the Paschal Triduum.

In the Gospel According to Saint John, the 'hour' of Christ refers to the four major events related to his death and which the Church commemorates from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday.

1. The Last Supper, which Jesus celebrates with His disciples and which the Church commemorates on Holy Thursday
2. The passion and the death of Jesus, which the Church commemorates on Good Friday
3. The vigil of Mary, His mother, which is celebrated on Holy Saturday
4. The resurrection of Jesus on Easter morning, which is celebrated on Easter Sunday

There are other smaller icons which also bring to mind the various aspects of the Eucharist, the table of the New Covenant:

5. The multiplication of the loaves:

Jesus desired to give meaning to the lives of the people who followed him and the words he tells them foreshadow the Last Supper (cf. *Mt* 14: 19; 15: 36) and the people in the crowd gathered to hear him ate much as they wanted of the 'bread of life' which he shared with them (cf. *Mt* 14, 20-21; 15, 37), and so on.

6. The wedding at Cana:

After the Covenant was made at Mount Sinai and Moses read the Tables of the Law (the Ten Commandments), the people replied three times: "*Whatsoever Yahweh has said, we will do*" (*Ex* 19: 8; cf. 24: 3-7). Thus began the celebration of the covenant between God and His people. The wedding at Cana renews this celebration of the covenant, or the marriage of God and humanity, when the mother of Jesus – the Word made flesh – says to the servants: "*Do whatever he tells you*" (*Jn* 2: 5).



7. The washing of the feet

This act, which is recorded in the Gospel According to Saint John, occurs during the Last Supper. After washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus tells them that they must wash each others' feet (cf. *Jn* 13: 13-15), to serve one another, and to fulfil his commandment to love one another (cf. *Jn* 15:12-14).

8. The disciples at Emmaus

The resurrected Jesus lifts up the heart of two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He explains the Scriptures to them and makes himself known to them at the breaking of the bread (cf. *Lk.* 24: 13-35).

c) *The base of the Ark and a people journeying to a world of abundance*

The base of the Ark of the New Covenant is modeled after a ship. It reminds us of Noah's Ark but it refers more to the boat of Peter, the disciple whom Jesus will make the foundation of his church (*Jn* 1: 42). Therefore, ever since the institution of the New Covenant, the boat has been a symbol of the Church, the people of God who are journeying together.

Just as Christ told Peter to put out into deep water (cf. *Lk* 5: 4), we are sent to all nations to bear witness to the Gospel.

The five different types of wood used for the base of the ark symbolize the universality of the Church and indicate that the Good News of the Gospel is for all nations, which are called to be one in Jesus Christ.



d) *The angels in adoration before the mystery*

In ancient Israel, the presence of God among his people was indicated by the cloud that enveloped the Ark of the Covenant. God would come to meet them between the wings of the seraphim above the seat of the ark (cf. *Ex 25: 21*).

Through the symbolic nature of the Ark of the New Covenant, the angels are turned in adoration towards the mystery of Christ, which the Ark as a whole represents.

e) *The ship's hold, a space for Eucharistic commitment*

The ship's hold at the base of the Ark is a place where people can put testimony of their commitment as Christians, to mark the passage of the Ark as it travels from one community to the next. In his encyclical *God is Love*, Benedict XVI reminds us that "a Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented" (14). The Eucharist and the Church's mission are thus forever intertwined. That is why we have included Eucharistic commitment as one of the suggested activities in this document.

f) *The journey of the Ark*

The ancient Israelites, the people of God, carried the Ark on their march (cf. *Nb 10: 33-35*). The Ark of the New Covenant will be carried in processions from various places of religious significance, e.g., from one diocese to another or from one church to another. It is intended as a symbol to accompany the march of the Church, the people of God, believers of all ages as they follow the path of faith in the footsteps of Christ. It is a versatile symbol which allows us to be creative and which can bring together all persons who want to approach the mystery of Christ, persons to whom we may say just as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman: "*If you only knew the gift of God*" (*Jn 4: 10*).



3. Ideas for activities

3.1 *Three components*

The Ark of the New Covenant is an original work that has been created to encourage a variety of activities linked with the three main objectives of the Eucharistic Congress: catechesis, liturgy and commitment. Regardless of the amount of time the ark spends in any one place and regardless of the length of the activities held to mark its passage, we hope that all activities will integrate these objectives.

Catechesis: The chest of the ark rests on a base, which is in the form of a ship. The chest is rich in Eucharistic symbols by means of icons referring to passages from the Gospel. These iconographic representations can serve as the basis for Eucharistic catechesis.

Liturgy: The chest is designed to display the Book of the Word or a monstrance containing the Real Presence, thus allowing adaptations for various liturgical prayers or other forms of prayer

The Ark of the New Covenant is also a 'seat' for the King of Kings, the Christ, who is present in Eucharistic form in the monstrance.

It is also a chest which contains the Holy Scriptures, that is, the Bible made up of the texts of the Old Testament and the New Testament. These texts which are proclaimed in the liturgy and are meditated upon in our daily lives are the presence of Christ, who instructs, the people, his Church, through his Word.

Commitment: The ark is designed to hold the commitment forms of the faithful, who will be invited to sign a 'Eucharistic charter.'

3.2 *The ark, a symbol which takes us to the heart of the six presences*

The Ark of the New Covenant was designed above all to assist in the spiritual presentation for the International Eucharistic Congress. In preparing this document, the committee considered at length the different places of presence recognized by the Church. The results of this reflection are seen in the proposed Eucharistic commitment and catechesis activities.

We hope that the passage of the ark will help people reflect even more deeply on the six presences where the resurrected Christ is recognized and still living among us, so that they may say, as Thomas did, "*My Lord and God!*" (cf. Jn 20: 28). Following are brief descriptions of each of these six places of presence:



1. The coming together of the community

In coming together, the Christian community is a place of Christ's presence, as he promised: "*For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them*" (Mt 18: 20).

2. The Word of Life

When the Holy Scriptures are proclaimed in the Church in prayer, this announcement of the Word is a place for the presence of Christ, our Master and Lord (cf. Jn 13: 13-14), who teaches and speaks to his disciples.³

3. Ordained minister

The presidency of ordained ministers in the various celebrations of the Sacraments is a place for the presence of Christ, who is the head and guide of his Church,⁴ the Christian community gathered together in prayer.

4. The bread and the wine

The bread and the wine are places for the presence of Christ. This presence may be extended through the presentation of the bread as the consecrated host, "*the living bread which has come down from heaven*" (Jn 6: 51), which we give to one another in love.

5. God's presence in my brothers and sisters as a sign of human solidarity

As Christians, we are called to recognize the presence of God in all those we meet every day: "*in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me*" (Mt 25: 40).

³ Cf. VATICAN COUNCIL II, Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* on the Sacred Liturgy (December 4, 1963) no. 7: "... [Christ] is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church..."

⁴ Cf. VATICAN COUNCIL II, Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* on the Sacred Liturgy (December 4, 1963) no. 7: "... [Christ] is present ... not only in the person of His minister, the same now offering through the ministry of priests, who formerly offered Himself on the cross ... He is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ who baptizes..."



6. The believer as a sign of God's presence among his brothers and sisters

This refers to the commitment each of us makes to help build a fairer and more brotherly world. In taking part in the Eucharistic meal, the baptized are called to be signs of God's presence in the world and to obey his final command: *"Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time"* (Mt 28: 19-20).

Note : See pages 19 – 20 for other explanations about the six presences.

3.3 The Eucharistic Charter

→ Preparing the Eucharistic Charter

The Eucharistic Charter is made up of three components:

- **A Eucharistic prayer**

The prayer is inspired by the four smallest icons in the Ark, namely, the Wedding of Cana, the multiplication of the loaves, the washing of the feet, and the disciples at Emmaus. These icons also represent the virtues of faith, hope and love.

- **A pledge**

The suggestions for commitment are based on the six places of presence recognized by the Church and described above at point 3b. The pronoun 'I' is preferred; this allows the pledge to be recited by either a group or a person.

‣ **Note :** The attached file gives ideas allowing people to find other words to signify this commitment.

- **A process**

To complete this approach, people may wish to construct and bring a cardboard or paper fish (in the form of the IXTHUS symbol), on which they write their names, and perhaps their address or diocese as well, to represent their pledge.

They place the fish in the hold of the ark.



The IXTHUS symbol for the fish was chosen because it has accompanied Christians since the very beginning of the Church. In the time of the persecutions, the first Christians used it to recognize one another, and the use of letters from the Greek alphabet bears witness to the Christian faith in a few words: Jesus Christ, Son of God Saviour.

Note : To keep records, a log will accompany the ark throughout its pilgrimage. We suggest that the name of group or community which receives the ark be entered into this book. This community approach means that we form a single body, the Body of Christ.



→ ***Prayer of the Eucharistic Charter***

Jesus, in Cana,
you changed water into wine,
so that we may continue to celebrate the covenant.
May your Eucharist,
in which the bread and wine are your body and blood given up for us,
strengthen our faith and lead us to follow in your word.

Jesus, in the desert,
you spoke of the Kingdom,
you healed the sick and multiplied the loaves
to nourish the bodies and spirits of the multitude,
May your Eucharist, Word and Bread of Life,
restore meaning to our lives and bring hope back into our hearts.

Jesus, at the Last Supper,
by washing the feet of your disciples, you showed
that there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.
May your Eucharist restore warmth to hearts grown cold
and lead us to serve with joy and simplicity
all the persons we meet on our journey,
especially the most needy.

Jesus, at Emmaus,
you explained the Scriptures to those who thought they were lost,
and you revealed yourself at the breaking of Bread.
May your Eucharist lead us to a better understanding of the Scriptures,
may it open our eyes to your presence
and kindle in us the ardent desire to announce your resurrection.

Fulfilled by so much love and grace,
and led by your Spirit,
we are here to respond to the love
that you share with us through the Eucharist.



Pledge

Jesus,

1. **I pledge to respond to your invitation to take part in the Sunday Eucharist with my brothers and sisters gathered together.**
For where two or three meet in my name, I am gathered there among them. (Mt 18: 20)
2. **I pledge to carefully listen to Your Word. I will meditate and pray on your Word. I will put your Word into practice and do what you say, day after day.**
And the Word became flesh and he lived among us. (Jn 1: 14)
3. **I pledge to support the priest in his ministry and recognize that you are acting through him in the Eucharist and other sacraments.**
While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said: 'Take, eat: this is my body.' (Mt 26: 26)
4. **I pledge to welcome your love by partaking of your body and to take the time to prolong our encounter in prayer and adoration.**
I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry; whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. (Jn 6: 35)
5. **I pledge to recognize you in all people, especially those who are the most difficult to love, seeing in everyone a brother, a sister, because God's Spirit dwells in everyone.**
Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? (1 Cor 3: 16)
6. **I pledge to stand by you, Jesus crucified, along with your mother, the Virgin Mary, helping my brothers and sisters who suffer in body, mind and spirit.**
Just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me. (Mt 25: 40)



- **Enhancing our understanding of the Eucharistic commitment based on the six places of presence, in relation with the texts of the New Testament**

1. **The coming together of the community:** Jesus brought multitudes together. The Good Shepherd was accomplishing his first duty – gather up the lost sheep of Israel. He restored communion with persons isolated by sickness, evil, hate, envy, pride. He also said: *“And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and I must lead these too. They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock, one shepherd”* (Jn 10: 16). He also sent his disciples to do what he was doing: *“Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations”* (Mt 28: 19).
2. **The Word of life:** In speaking about her Son at Cana, Mary told the servants: *“Do whatever he tells you”* (Jn 2: 5). As our master, Jesus taught with wisdom and as the New Moses, he gave a new law: *“You must love one another just as I have loved you”* (Jn 13: 34). He also said: *“My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice”* (Lk 8: 21). After his resurrection, his explanation based on the Scriptures lifted up the hearts of the disciples at Emmaus, who were downcast, and allowed them to read again and better understand his passion and death.
3. **Ordained minister:** Jesus came to us to announce good news: God loves us and wants to save us (cf. Lk 4: 14-21). From the start of his public ministry, Jesus called people to follow him (cf. Mk 1: 16-20) and *“he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God”* (Lk 9: 2; cf. Lk 10: 1). He made his ministry visible by words and good deeds. But even that was not enough. Having pity on the crowds because they were tired and depressed like sheep without a shepherd, (cf. Mt 9: 36), Jesus told his disciples: *“The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to do his harvesting”* (Lk 10: 2).
4. **The bread and the wine:** Jesus said: *“I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world”* (Jn 6: 51). He is the new manna from heaven (cf. Ex 16: 1-36), as we see in the Last Supper, which he shared with his disciples to show his love for them to the end: *“Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to the disciples. ‘Take it and eat,’ he said, ‘this is my body.’”* (Mt 26: 26). He then offered them the wine as his body, his life (cf. Mt 26: 26-29).

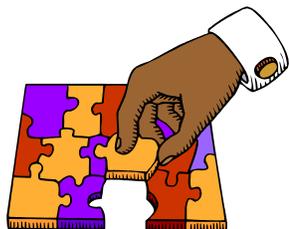


5. **God's presence in my brothers and sisters:** The resurrected Jesus commanded his disciples to announce the good news of salvation to all nations and to teach them to keep all the commands he had given them. He assured them of his presence at all times and in all places: *"And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time"* (Mt 28: 20).

6. **The believer, sign of God's presence among his brothers and sisters:** In the parable of the Last Judgement, Jesus told his disciples to comfort all those who suffer, who are hungry or ill, poor or in prison. This is because, as he said to his disciples: *"In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me"* (Mt 25: 40).



4. Use your creativity



Not all the pieces you need
are in this document....



Through the intermediary and
support of us all,
God carries out his work
and completes his creation...



We hope you will send your comments and suggestions for
adding to this document, which is a work in progress. You
can send them by mail, fax, or better yet, by e-mail. And
please tell others about them as well.

5. Contact us



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— Appendices —

- 1. Models for rites
 - 1.1 Introductory rite
 - 1.2 Offertory rite and rite of blessing
 - 1.3 Dismissal rite
- 2. Catechesis model
- 3. Thematic sheets
 - 3.1 The Annunciation
 - 3.2 Saint Mary, Mother of God
 - 3.3 The Wedding at Cana
 - 3.4 The disciples of Jesus
 - 3.5 The multiplication of the loaves
 - 3.6 Peter's boat
 - 3.7 The Last Supper.....
 - 3.8 The washing of the feet.....
 - 3.9 The passion of Jesus Christ
 - 3.10 The absence of Christ
 - 3.11 The Resurrection.....
 - 3.12 The disciples at Emmaus
- 4. Suggestions for songs
- 5. Other prayers
- 6. Texts for reflection
- 7. References on the life of the Blessed
- 8. Documents to photocopy

Press file.....

Model for Eucharistic commitment

Meaning of adoration

Note : The “Appendices” are available at the General Secretariat.

