

# Official Prayer of the 49th International Eucharistic Congress

God our Father,  
We bless you and give you thanks  
For your Son Jesus, the gift of your love  
For the life of the world.

Watch over your Church as it celebrates in joy and hope  
The 49<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress.

Renew our faith in the Holy Eucharist,  
The memorial of your Son's death and resurrection.

May your Holy Spirit shed its light upon us  
And grant us strength  
To serve as faithful witnesses to the Gospel.

Nourish us with your Word and your Bread of Life  
So that united with Mary,  
The Mother of your Divine Son and Mother of the Church,  
We will bear much fruit  
For the salvation of the world.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



*Gift of God*

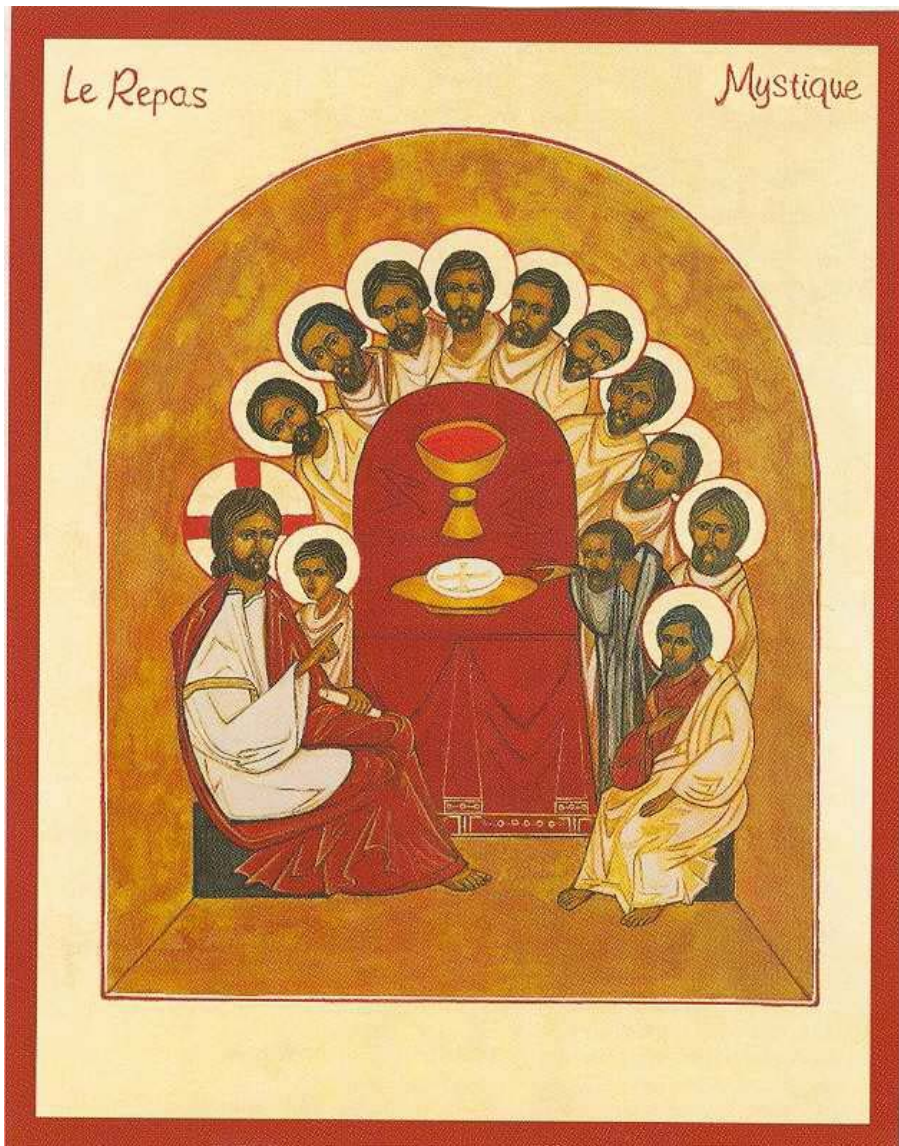
# The Catholic Women's League of Canada Edmonton Diocesan Council



## The Eucharist: A gift of God for the Life of the World Spiritual Program #1



(Based on materials from the 49th International Eucharistic Congress)



## CLOSING PRAYER

**ALL:** Wondrous God,  
Let our prayers be joined  
With the prayers of all those who pray today.  
Protect us as we travel home.  
As we place our lives in your holy hands.  
And when this day draws to an end,  
May we be able to reflect on it with holy satisfaction,  
Knowing that we have served you well.  
Amen.

**ALL:** 49th International Eucharistic Congress Prayer (on back page)



## **Eucharist as Treasure** (Reader 4)

On their wedding day a couple traditionally receives beautiful gifts from family and friends. But the greatest gift they receive is the one they give, the gift of self. Their mutual self-giving is the real treasure. Everyday, at every moment, the Eucharist is being celebrated throughout the world.



Christians have found no better thing to do to give thanks to God and to intercede for those they love than this action given to us by Jesus the night before He died. This action sums up and makes present to us today the total self-giving of Jesus for the life of the world. His total gift of self is a treasure, a wave of love rolling over the centuries for us and for all until He comes again.

### **PRAYER**

**ALL** You have blessed all generations, God most high,  
in Jesus, our compassionate Saviour,  
for through Him you invite us to your kingdom,  
welcome us to your table, and provide us with nourishment in  
abundance.  
Teach us to imitate your unfailing kindness and to build up Christ's  
body, the Church,  
by generously handing on to others the gifts we have received from  
your bounty.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives  
and reigns  
with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and  
ever.  
Amen.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

### **PRAYER**

**ALL** God our Father,  
look with favor on your Church  
to celebrate the International Eucharistic Congress  
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.

## **REFLECTION ON THE EUCHARIST**

Source: 49th International Eucharistic Congress:  
Reflection and prayer sheets for the Eucharistic Journey 2006 - 2008)

*To bring to mind the riches of the Eucharist, the Church uses  
these words: Source, Center, Summit and Treasure*

### **Eucharist as Source** (Reader 1)

What a paradox the Constitution on the Liturgy  
presents to us in article 10: All the Church's work  
in the world leads it to the eucharistic banquet;  
yet, the Eucharist is the source of the Church's power to do the work!  
This sounds like a chicken and egg conundrum. Which comes first?



Article 10 also helps us solve this puzzle: The Church's life and work in the world is meant to draw people to the table of the eucharistic feast so that they can be formed to go out and draw still more people to the feast of life, where God is glorified and humanity is divinized. Happy are we who are called to this supper! Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

### PRAYER

**ALL** O God, you open wide your hand,  
giving us food in due season.  
Out of your never-failing abundance,  
satisfy the hungers of body and soul  
and lead all peoples of the earth  
to the feast of the world to come.  
We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

### Eucharist as centre (Reader 2)

No one today would seriously debate the sun and earth as centre of the universe. Still, one aspect of that discussion remains useful to us – it was not an argument about astronomy but about reality. If earth is the centre, then humanity is the centre – and everything revolves around us! To



acknowledge Eucharist as the centre of the life of the Church is to celebrate Eucharist as the focus of Christian life. But Eucharist not as object – but as mystery. Everything revolves around Eucharist: as sacrifice, sacrament, gift, celebration, meal... as the making present of and our sharing in the death and resurrection of the Lord. The life of Church and Christian revolve around our fulfillment of Jesus' ultimate command: Do this in memory of me!

### PRAYER

**ALL** Open our hearts to your gifts, Lord Jesus;  
centre our lives on your presence.  
May the mystery of the Eucharist  
that we celebrate and adore  
bring us to the full and eternal life  
which is its promise and pledge. Amen.

### Eucharist as Summit (Reader 3)

The Eucharist is the summit, the apex, the culmination, the high point of our life in Christ. It is the great act of thanksgiving, when Christ makes present to us his death, resurrection and glorious ascension, and wraps us, the members of his Body, in his redeeming love. It is to this highest prayer of praise that we bring our whole lives, who we are, what we do, our needs and concerns, and the needs of the world, in order to have it all transformed in Christ's love. Thus we can say at the end of each weekly celebration, "Thanks be to God," as we go on with spirits renewed, hearts united, and ready for service.



### PRAYER

**ALL** You have blessed all generations,  
O God most high,  
in Jesus, our compassionate Saviour;  
for through him you invite us to your kingdom,  
welcome us to your table,  
and provide us with nourishment in abundance.  
Teach us to treasure the encounter with you in the Eucharist  
as the high point of our life in Christ,  
and to build up Christ's body by handing on to others  
the gifts we have so generously received.  
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.