



Our Eucharistic Congress Checklist

When we go on a trip, we prepare by buying what we need and carefully packing our luggage. If we fly, we buy a plane ticket; if we drive, we service the car. But most of all, we anticipate who and what we will see. The trip's object is in our thoughts and in our hearts.

Likewise, we prepare for our trip to St. John the Baptist, Waunakee, on Sept. 29-Oct. 1, for the ***Madison Diocesan Eucharistic Congress***, both spiritually and practically.

Spiritual preparation

Most important, we **pray**—approaching God as we do at Mass—with humility, docility, and receptivity to His will. We open ourselves to the Holy Spirit whose work precedes anything we do, any response we make to Him.

“[T]he Holy Spirit initiates the movement of God in our hearts. ... [O]ur first step toward Him is always a response to His initial invitation.” (Hollcraft)

We take time to **reflect** upon the mysteries of redemption that culminate in the Eucharist: Jesus' Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection, the Trinity's indwelling, and His victory over sin and death to bring us into His divine life as children of God. We spend time with Jesus in the Eucharist, seeing these realities present in **Him**. Then, we **live the divine life** in the world, loving others because we love God...who first loved us.

In other words, interior preparation is our daily journey with Christ. The Congress is part of that journey. We are **going** someplace, **anticipating** what we will see, who we will meet, and most of all, **seeking** Jesus Himself. We aren't sitting still; we're **pursuing** Him. It's part of our continuous pursuit of holiness and union with God.

Practical preparation

Now, we come to the practical parts of our preparation. First, **registration is necessary**; we have space and attendance limitations. Second, take time to anticipate what lies ahead:

Masses: Prepare to attend each Mass with a renewed reverence, strengthened by the grace of the Holy Eucharist. Beautiful music will penetrate each Mass, capped by the Madison Diocesan Choir on Sunday. A Mass program will be available for each Mass, including Friday's Night Prayer and Saturday's Morning Prayer.

Talks: Fr. John Riccardo, Fr. Craig Vasek, and Helen Alvare will speak to an English audience; Andres Alvare, and P. Augustin De La Vega, to a Spanish audience. All speakers are

accomplished, gifted, and bring unique, strong insights to their talks. So, take notes on what inspires you and bring them with you into the Conversion Call period. [**Note:** Talks will be recorded for future viewing. And Masses will be livestreamed for those who cannot attend.]

Conversion Call: This element needs your careful preparation. It follows every talk as a means of responding to what you heard and to the movement of the Holy Spirit in your soul. You might choose one in the morning, then another in the afternoon. Each option has a space limitation. So, in advance, please anticipate a second choice if your first choice is full:

- **Confession, spiritual direction, and intercessory prayer** in the main sanctuary: Priests will hear Confessions around the sanctuary's perimeter and elsewhere. Spiritual direction is offered to those seeking a deeper interior life (watch for signing). If you would like to meet with someone, one-on-one, to talk about the faith or to seek their prayers, find a prayer intercessor near the altar, wearing a green lanyard.
- **Small Group Discussion** in the Multi-Purpose Tent: Discussion opens doors and hearts to a new understanding, to a deeper wisdom that sees everything in relation to God. So, bring nuggets from the talks to share and relate with others. Join a group and make new friends. Leaders wearing blue lanyards will greet you at the Tent.
- **Eucharistic workshops** in the school: Monsignor James Bartylla will bring Eucharistic truths and the mysteries of God to an English audience in the school cafeteria; Bishop Donald Hying, to a Spanish audience in the gym. Truths are runways that allow faith to take flight. They explain the mystery while faith and grace give it wings. The more we know God, the more we love Him.
- **Adoration** in the small church is offered throughout the weekend except during the keynote talks. The Sisters of Mary Morning Star will lead an hour of devotion during Adoration on Saturday afternoon.

Childcare: Several groups come together to offer childcare at the Congress: Catholic Schoolhouse, Divine Mercy Academy, Our Lady's Good Helpers Preschool Co-op, Little Flowers Group, St. John the Baptist School, and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. They will care for children (activities and play) over one year old. Please register for childcare through the Congress's website (blessedbrokenandgiven.com), clicking the gold button at the top. At the Congress, go to the *Check-In Tent* for directions.

Parking: When St. John the Baptist parking lot is full, you may find additional parking at the *Waukegan Heritage Elementary School* next door, the *Waukegan Community High School* (7-minute walk) at 301 Community Drive, and at the *Village Center*, 333 S. Madison St. There will be parking for the disabled at St. John's lot. Attendants will direct parking. Look for the red coats.

Early check-in: Please come early. When you arrive, go to the *Check-In Tent* between the main church and school. The Hospitality Group (red lanyards) will greet you, give you your badge and ticket for the lunch you purchased, and a registration bag with the Handbook and other items. Preview the Handbook at blessedbrokenandgiven.com to help in your preparation.

Thank you and see you at the Congress!