

Preparing for the Eucharistic Congress
Navan, 15 February 2012

John Howard opened the meeting and welcomed everyone including the two people from IEC head office, Francois David and Paul Rooney.

All recited together the Congress prayer.

Dick Byrne was first to speak and welcomed everyone and used this space to give a synopsis of the Congress weekend here in Navan. He told of notes, texts, cards and proclamations that came from the weekend. Dick spoke of the messages from the different keynote speakers over the weekend.

Francois spoke about **aspects of pastoral preparation and youth preparation for the Congress and youth at the Congress** itself. Chiara Luce Youth Space will be where most of the youth activities will be happening in the RDS. There will also be activities throughout the city. There is a programme for the youth space and this is detailed in the programme booklet that was distributed. There are four different spaces within the youth space. There are different activities going on each day drama, praise, drama and getting people within the dynamic space for young people. Each day will have different bishops. There will be conversations with the bishops on different days. The question will be given to the young people and each will have a conversation with the bishops. Different media will be used on different days depending on what the topics and sections are all about. Taize prayer will be used as well as adorations, reconciliation, and there will be personal support throughout the week. Check out www.iec2012.ie/youth.

Paul Rooney spoke on volunteering. Outside of Dublin, Meath has the most volunteers. Volunteers are in place at the moment; there are people helping with packing, phone calls etc. As we get closer to the Congress, there will be more and more people required. Volunteers are needed at the Airport to meet and greet visitors. There will also a requirement for the week after the congress too. Job specific training will be provided for volunteers in some of the following: hospitality, meet and greet, media services, logistics, transportation, information, medical, volunteer, translation services, pastoral services to name but a few. Garda vetting will be required for volunteers.

General information:

- Schools – please make a big effort to engage with teachers and students in primary and secondary school. Menu of ideas available from John and the Congress committee. (Handout at meeting) Photocopy them and give them to schools in your parish asap . John noted it was a chance of a lifetime to get young people to focus on the Eucharist through their preparation for IEC and attendance at it.
- There are loads of resources that can be used for primary and secondary school (see IEC website and school resources.)
- Registration: there is frustration for some people in parishes trying to register but there is a number that you can call on in the school flyer and you can register that way by phone. You just need an email address.
- Navan have a booking office for the congress, an information centre and Jack in the office will do the registration for you. You can also book a place on the bus from there as well if you live near Navan.

- Parishes are encouraged to seek a volunteer in their own parish who might offer this opportunity to people locally, say one evening a week in their own home or in a school or in a parish office.
- No photo id is required to go to the Congress.
- Priests do need photo id if they wish to concelebrate Mass..
- Group registration: with 7 ppl or more. Encourage people in each parish to organise buses asap to get people up to the RDS. Parking will be very limited for cars.
- Statio Orbis in Croke Park: Parishes will have a very limited amount of tickets approx 15 - 20 that they can give out. But if you register for 3 or more days for the congress you will be invited to apply for a ticket to go to Croke Park.
- Bishop sent his apology that he could not attend due to a prior commitment.
- Bishop Smith wished us to express the fact that he would like that something would happen in each parish in the weeks leading up to the Congress, maybe mirroring in a way what happened in our preparation in each parish leading up to the Pope's visit in 1979
- Fr Declan Hurley: In the run up to the Congress we need to bring the congress to the parish. One suggestion was (1979) there was a mission in each parish, but this time round it might be wise to focus on Sunday Masses when the majority of people are attending masses and available to attend.. There is a suggestion that during the Sundays of May and first Sunday of June that there would be a catechesis on the various parts of the Mass.
- Priests in the same deanery might swap pulpits for this initiative.
- Meath Diocese's special day for the Congress is **TUESDAY 12th of June**. The theme is: In Communion with family and marriage.
- Parishes are encouraged to have as many young and old alike to go on that day. What might we do to identify everyone from our diocese at the RDS on that day??

Leading into the Congress (the 5 weeks / weekends)

A big push needed in Schools:

Teachers will be very pleased to hear of different initiatives that could be attempted in schools between now and June 10th. (see handout on menu of ideas for schools)

Rosary beads/cards packs are available from Detta Molly Rosary of Hope group (0868197111) in Mayo for a few cents or a donation.

There are 22 school days, that will enable the school children to say 20 decades of the rosary during the month of May for the success of the congress. It will mean saying one decade a day. Great if they had a beads for that. They could be encouraged to say another decade at home. It would be wonderful to bring the rosary back into the school and homes.

In schools they might have a Special Eucharistic Congress Wall, in the corridor or somewhere in the school with cuttings from papers and information on the congress linking into 1932 Congress too.

One lady said: Presentation being made to all those in her parish that were born before the congress 1932 giving them certificates and pins.

Kinnegad – one-week mission in March, involving the confirmation class and grandparents. They are very disappointed not be receiving the Bell that week as it will be in Rome.

Fr Mc Hale a priest in Mayo brought out a DVD explaining the Mass and very good.. Available in Knock.

If you volunteer, you will get into the Statsio Orbis.

Question	Answer
To go to the congress for any day to you need to register?	Yes every day you must register.
Drumconrath: Statio Orbis. How does a parish make sure that they get their tickets?	Book for at least three days for the congress
Young people what is the minimum age	17-25 years. Once a young person arrives there is child protection issue. Once registered anyone can access that space. Its not adapted to younger people.
With a minor	Each minor must have an adult accompanying them.
Maximum age for volunteers	18 years plus. Oldest is 82 years of age. None is too old to volunteer.
Can you volunteer for only one day:?	There will be a minimum of 5 days required due to rostering and making sure that all aspects can be covered
How long is the day for volunteers?	Possibly 8 hours, could be 6 hours depending on the roles.
Money. How much will it cost for youth section?	Student tickets and minors, one day: no difference really, but 3 to 5 days is much cheaper. Accommodation may work out quite expensive. UCD accommodation will be used for the Congress weekend. Also looking for free/really cheap accommodation for young people. There are possibilities for accommodation and Francois can help out in getting accommodation sorted for one and all. Young people will need more than one day.
Is there availability of accommodation close to the RDS	
No better preparation. Devine Mercy conference on this weekend.	
Number of days that one attends? Do they have to be consecutive??	Yes, the three days needs to be consecutive.

Fr Robert McCabe spoke; Everyone in the diocese should know that it's the 12th of June that is our special Diocesan day at the Eucharistic Congress. Plan for schools and for all to make sure that they do not have other tours on that day and get as many people as you can to go for the 12th.

He went on to say that The Congress has to be lived in the RDS and the Statio Orbis should not be the only event that people attend. All suggestions that people have to push the 12th please pass it on to as many in parishes as possible.

Final note: Confirmation starting soon so there is a time and a space for getting people ready for the congress week. The theme of IEC 2012 is 'The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with one another'. This is ideal to explore with the confirmation classes and indeed their parents.

It was once again emphasised that it would be very beneficial if every parish in our diocese made a real effort in the final 5 weeks leading into the IEC itself to do something.

John thanked one and all again for their attendance at the event and a special thanks to Dick, Francois and Paul for their presentations.

Fr M V Daly led us in the concluding prayer

Meeting was closed at 9.30 with each one getting extensive handouts and refreshments.