



June 15, 2023

Dear pastors, priests brother deacons and parish leaders:

As you know, the Bishops of the United States as well as Bishop Garcia has invited the local Church to embark on a three-year period of **Eucharistic Revival**. Bishop appointed Fr. Gerson Espinosa to lead this diocesan effort and there have been a number of events and speakers this year. Ending the year this last Saturday, many hundreds participated in a wonderful Eucharistic Revival Congress at Sacred Heart Church in Salinas. From time to time, parishioners and clergy ask me regarding the Bishop's thoughts and focus on this matter. I would like to share his homily from the Congress Opening Mass, where he speaks very clearly of the focus he would like to see accomplished in our diocese. A couple of quotes:

- "...the Eucharistic Revival should not be just about, "What is the Eucharist?" but perhaps more importantly "How do we celebrate the Eucharist, and "What does the Eucharist invite us to do and be for one another?"
- "...a true Eucharistic Revival will occur by our ability to grow in a greater awareness of and commitment to the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist...."

He speaks of the four-fold presence of Christ in the Eucharist; good, strong, vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming celebrations of our Sunday Liturgies with engaged assemblies and ministers of the Liturgy that represent the many groups in our parish; the primacy of the Sunday Liturgy over and above devotional practices, as helpful as they are to some; and the importance of formation of our people in the Liturgy. Finally, he emphasizes that if we truly work on our Sunday Mass celebration, its power to transform us will be manifest such that we become true missionary disciples that participate in the Lord's mission of transforming the world.

I recommend you review this homily, perhaps post it on your parish websites and utilize it in your own work in the parishes to revitalize the central focus of our worship.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Deacon David R. Ford, Th.M., S.T.L.

Vice-Chancellor and Director of Pastoral Ministries

Director of the Diaconate and of Ministry Formation

DIOCESE OF MONTEREY - DIOCESAN EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS 2023

Last year the Catholic Church in the United States invited all of us to begin a three-year study and reflection on the Eucharist. It was given the title *Eucharistic Revival*. As a Diocese, we begin the year by celebrating Mass and having a Eucharistic procession down the main street of the city of Greenfield. Some of you may have been present. Then throughout the year we have had various speakers come into our Diocese to offer a day of reflection on the Eucharist. Today, we acknowledge the end of this first year, by having this Diocesan Eucharistic Congress, again giving us the opportunity to grow in our understanding of Eucharist and what it compels us to do and be.

Lo he dicho antes y lo diré de nuevo, el Avivamiento Eucarístico no debe ser solo acerca de la pregunta "¿Qué es la Eucaristía?", sino quizás de lo más importante: "¿Cómo celebramos la Eucaristía?" y "¿Qué nos invita la Eucaristía a hacer y ser los unos para los otros?" Todo comienza con lo que ocurre sobre y alrededor de esta Mesa.

I have said before and I will say again, the Eucharistic Revival should not be just about ***“What is the Eucharist?”*** but perhaps most importantly ***“How do we celebrate Eucharist?”*** and ***“What does the Eucharist invite us to do and be for one another?”*** It all begins with what occurs on and around this Table. Over fifty years ago at the Second Vatican Council, the Church fathers called for a renewal in ***“How we celebrate Eucharist?”*** It was way more than just changing the language of the Mass being celebrated into the language of the people, as important as that was for sure. **El Concilio llamó al pueblo de Dios a convertirse en “participantes plenos, conscientes y activos” en la liturgia. No debíamos seguir siendo meros espectadores en una liturgia que se “hacía” para nosotros.** The Council called for the people of God to become *‘full, conscious, active participants’ in the liturgy.* We were not to continue being mere spectators in a liturgy that was being ‘done’ for us. Rather, ***by virtue of our baptism, we were called to be fully engaged in the liturgy by virtue of our senses, our posture, our singing, our responses, our hearing and even our silence.***

I believe that we can all agree that the pandemic shook us all to our core. It stripped us of our understanding of what it means to ‘celebrate’ Eucharist. We had to resort to living in our bubbles! **Debido a nuestra incapacidad de reunirnos para adorar unos con otros, tuvimos que recurrir a celebraciones virtuales de la**

Eucaristía. Due to our inability to gather to worship with one another, we had to resort to virtual celebrations of the Eucharist. Unquestionably, we did what we had to do for the sake of the protection and benefit of our people and the common good, but watching Mass from the comfort of my living room dressed in my pajamas was not good for any of us. **Fácilmente comenzamos a sentirnos cómodos en la celebración de este hermoso Sacramento de la Eucaristía en la comodidad y aislamiento de nuestros hogares.** We easily began to become comfortable in the celebration of this beautiful **Sacrament of the Eucharist** in the comfort and isolation of our homes. Please understand, Mass on Television and/or live stream proved to be very helpful for the elderly, sick and homebound. But this was never meant to be the norm for the rest of us, nor should it be.

Es mi esperanza de que, a lo largo de estos dos últimos años de este viaje Eucarístico, se produzca *un verdadero renacimiento eucarístico por nuestra capacidad de crecer para tener una mayor conciencia y compromiso con la celebración dominical de la Eucaristía por parte del Pueblo de Dios.* It is my hope that throughout these last two years of this Eucharistic journey, ***a true Eucharistic Revival will occur by our ability to grow in a greater awareness of and commitment to the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist by the People of God.*** It is no secret that many have said that although people have been coming back

little by little after the pandemic, there are some people that have not returned and I do not know if they ever will.

I realize that this can be due to many reasons, but I think these last two years of a true Revival can give all of us who are already back in church, an opportunity to grow first and foremost in a ***'greater appreciation for the four-fold presence of Christ in the Eucharist: Gathered Assembly; Word of God Proclaimed; Priest, Deacon and Ministers of the Liturgy; and in the Eucharistic Bread Broken and Cup Outpoured.'*** ***Que tengamos un 'mayor aprecio por la presencia cuádruple de Cristo en la Eucaristía: Asamblea reunida; Palabra de Dios Proclamada; Sacerdote, Diácono y Ministros de la Liturgia; y en el Pan Eucarístico partido y la Copa derramada.'*** Why is this important? Because it is from this celebration that the People of God may come to understand that God's desire is that we come to a true understanding that ***"we are to become what we receive," "debemos convertirnos en lo que recibimos"***, thus transforming this world due to the Gift we have become Sunday after Sunday.

Es entonces a partir de esta celebración activa de la Eucaristía, que podemos crecer para apreciar una hermosa devoción llamada la Exposición Eucarística del Santísimo Sacramento. No es de otra forma. Las devociones a la Eucaristía

siempre deben ser vistas y entendidas como ***“derivadas de la celebración de la Eucaristía, no secundarias a ella”***.

It is then from this active celebration of the Eucharist, that then, we can grow to appreciate a beautiful devotion called **Eucharistic Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**. It is not the other way around. Eucharist devotions must always be seen and understood as ***‘flowing from the celebration of Eucharist, not secondary to it.’*** Also, in regard to the beautiful ritual of Exposition, there is a ritual that gives us direction as to *“how” and “when!”* *We do not just go and get the Eucharistic from the Tabernacle for the sake of giving people and experience of the devotion.* I get concerned when I hear people way more concerned about having *Eucharistic Exposition*, yet the effort and work placed into having good, strong and vibrant celebrations of Eucharist falls to the wayside.

I cannot tell you how many times a visitor has approached me after a Mass that is celebrated well with good singing by the Assembly, good preaching, active and engaged ministers of the liturgy from all ages: young and old, varied ethnicities, women and men, to just say ***“Thank You! Thank you because the Mass I just experienced and celebrated was transformative!”*** **Que simplemente digamos *“¡Gracias! ¡Gracias porque la Misa que acabo de experimentar y celebrar fue***

transformadora!” Also, what I do not think we need to do is to introduce things into the liturgy that are not part of our liturgy. What I mean is often times, people feel a need to be creative, whereby the liturgy becomes like a show, some theater. ***If the liturgy is celebrated well, as it has already been planned by the Church, it is transformative. Si la liturgia se celebra bien, a como ya ha sido planificada por la Iglesia, ésta es transformadora.***

My sisters and brothers, this kind of catechesis or Revival that I am speaking about does not occur overnight. It takes preparation, planning and execution in each of our parishes in the Diocese. ***Los invito como líderes a trabajar con el liderazgo de su parroquia para lograr verdaderamente un "verdadero Avivamiento Eucarístico"*** en sus respectivas parroquias. Este tipo de estudio, reflexión y formación debe darse en todos los niveles. Debe ocurrir en nuestros programas de catequesis, pastoral juvenil, escuelas Católicas y en variadas formas de ***formación de adultos.*** I invite you as leaders to work with your parish leadership in truly bring about a ***'true Eucharistic Revival'*** in your respective parish. This kind of study, reflection and formation must occur on all levels. It must occur in our catechetical programs, youth ministry, catholic schools and in varied forms of adult formation. If we do this, then I believe we can help our people to grow to have a deeper understanding of the Eucharist: ***Where it comes from, What it is,***

How we celebrate it and How it has the capability of transforming the world into a place of Justice and Peace, Mercy and Love. Para que nuestra gente tenga una mayor comprensión de dónde procede, qué es, cómo lo celebramos y cómo tiene la capacidad de transformar el mundo a ser un lugar de Justicia, de Paz, de Misericordia y de Amor.

May the Eucharist we celebrate this morning and every day enable us to be instruments in the Mission of Christ and in so doing, assist in the Evangelization and transformation of this world.

Most Reverend Daniel E. Garcia
Diocesan Eucharistic Congress
Sacred Heart Catholic Church
June 10, 2023