

10th National Eucharistic Congress

A historic Eucharistic Revival

BY MELISSA STREIT

The Eucharistic Revival from 2022-2025 is “discerned and called for by the bishops of the United States... rekindling a living faith in the hearts of Catholics across America and will unleash a new missionary chapter at this pivotal moment in church history.” (eucharisticcongress.org) Pilgrimage routes set forth from the northern, southern, eastern, and western points of the United States in May, and met up at the tenth Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis from July 17-21, 2024.



In this “unprecedented outpouring of grace,” three pilgrimage routes started in New Haven, CT, Brownsville, TX, and San Francisco, CA. The northern route (closest to our parish community), aptly named the Marian route, started at the headwaters of the Mississippi River at Lake Itasca, MN. These route pilgrims, which included six lay perpetual pilgrims, two seminarians, one friar, and one priest, visited The Basilica on May 26-27 while walking through Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois on their way to Indianapolis.

Basilica parishioners Doug Wayman and the Constance Chen/Patrick Johnson family met the Marian pilgrimage group at The Basilica in May and then attended the Eucharistic Congress in July.

“We hosted the Marian route pilgrims here overnight and I served at Mass with

them in the morning,” Doug shares. “There was a devotion that became obvious when we were around them. They were so open with joy and a youthful energy. I had been considering going to Indianapolis before hosting them but I really decided to go to the Congress when I was praying that morning at Mass after meeting the pilgrims and seeing God at work.”

Patrick also met the Marian pilgrims as the cantor at Mass that morning. Later, they brought their three boys to the Eucharistic Procession from the St. Paul Seminary to the Cathedral. “Yen, our 6-year-old, walked the four miles; our 5-month-old Jiunn was happy in the baby bjorn; and An-Francis, age 4, cruised in the stroller,” says Patrick.

The parish members prepared spiritually to attend the Eucharistic Congress. “Constance and I saw in depth how important faith was for our family, a heritage received from our parents and grandparents,” he adds. “So it was important to attend the Congress to immerse our young family in the rich culture of our Church. We wanted to demonstrate to our boys the multitude of people who respond to the call to love Jesus in the Eucharist.”

Doug, a fitness enthusiast, used a similar approach to prepare for the Congress. “I got more set with my adoration time and daily Mass,” he says, “to get more prayerfully intentional and to experience it fully. It is calling down the Holy Spirit and I wanted to be ready!” He attended sessions geared toward developing Eucharistic missionaries and ambassadors in parishes. “I thought they were the most appropriate for what I am trying to be.” He is particularly excited about the First Fridays with Eucharistic Adoration at The Basilica.

Constance and Patrick only attended a few sessions to not overextend their children. Constance, an architect, attended a session about investing in beautiful spaces. Patrick participated in a session on Catholic anthropology and the truth of the synthesis of body and soul as gifts from God. “And I’d say we witnessed the miracle when our

boys were able to kneel silently,” he adds.

“We met passionate young seminarians on fire to talk about their calling to the priesthood,” he shares, “and were touched by the warmth of love overflowing from the young religious sisters who were delighted to meet our boys.” On the drive down, they stopped in Champion, WI, which is the only approved Marian apparition site in the United States. Just as Constance finished telling the boys about the apparition, they turned into the Shrine and Patrick declared, “And this is where it happened!”



To which Yen responded from the back of their minivan, “You mean it’s real?”

“This sums up our trip,” shares Patrick. “Our faith is full of fantastic miracles that defy our understanding. But the greatest miracle is one that is so easily overlooked and taken for granted. The best part of the Eucharistic Congress was being reminded that Jesus Christ himself comes to us every Mass, and He’s truly present in the form of an inauspicious, humble little host. We have the privilege of receiving Him into ourselves, the creator of the universe, and it’s real.”

“I feel like my faith is strong, but now my faith is on fire,” Doug summarizes. “I am praying more for people and learning how to accept people where they’re at. Things got stronger for me — it threw a couple of extra logs on the fire. I am praying that people will have that personal experience with Christ.” ✚

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