



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

July 2024

Dear Friends in Christ,

What a joy it was to be a part of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress held July 17-21 in Indianapolis, Indiana. At the closing Mass, nearly 60,000 people prayed for a new Pentecost for the Church in the United States. More than 140 Catholics from the Diocese of Grand Rapids were among this group. I was edified to be greeted by many faithful from the diocese and I am grateful that you had an opportunity to participate in this historic moment for our Church. Our priests who attended the Congress told me that they too were pleased to run into many of their parishioners and acquaintances. Furthermore, many of you let me know that, although you could not be there, you followed the live coverage.

Every experience of Pentecost includes “a sending forth.” I would like to echo the words of Bishop Robert Barron, a keynote speaker at the Congress: “What if 70 million Catholics – starting tonight – began to live their faith radically and dramatically? Became Body offered, Blood poured out? We would change the country.”

In the Lord’s perfect timing, our Gospel proclamation over the next several weeks is from John Chapter 6. This chapter is known as the Bread of Life discourse. Its focus is to teach us that Jesus is truly a gift to us. In receiving His sBody and drinking His Blood, each of us is in turn a gift to others. Let us take the Gospel to heart and focus on a true conversion to the Eucharist. When we receive Christ in the Eucharist we are provided the nourishment to proclaim the Gospel joyfully and zealously.

Cardinal Luis Tagle, the Pope’s envoy for the Congress, spoke richly about the connection between Eucharistic conversion and being a missionary. I encourage you to watch his full homily on YouTube. “Those who choose to stay with Jesus will be sent by Jesus. The gift of his presence and love for us will be our gift to people. We should not keep Jesus to ourselves, that is not discipleship.”

Do not keep Jesus to yourself. Go out and proclaim His love to the world. Let us begin today!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids