



Ceremony of Passing on the Eucharistic Congress Bell.

The pilgrim journey of the Eucharistic Congress Bell, it is hoped, will be an opportunity for communities to come together to participate in an age old custom of walking together. Whilst the Bell is a symbol that is both visible and audible, the carrying of the Bell from location to location is in itself a symbol, but one experienced in the flesh. The activity of walking, and at some else's pace brings challenges and opportunities of its own. Unlike the solemn procession with the Blessed Sacrament on the feast of Corpus Christi, the pilgrimage with the Bell is less formal, and more sociable an occasion. Music, song, dance, conversation, silence and the many forms of performance and cultural self expression can all be part of this event.

It seems only fitting that having journeyed through the diocese and been, as it were a companion on the road to the Congress and its aims, the passing of the bell to the next diocese should be accompanied by some solemnity.

The vision for this event is a gathering at the crossroads, a coming together of neighbours, parishes, families and friends. The handing on of the bell is a sharing in faith and a prayer of blessing, a dialogue between the members of the two dioceses involved. It calls to mind the passing on of the gift of faith from one area of Ireland to another as our patron saints made their pilgrimages through our land, and of the passing on of faith from one generation to the next across time. This might be seen as a coming together that transcends time and space and acknowledges our participation today in that same activity.

Preparation

A time and venue on the border between the two dioceses is chosen.

The Participation Leaflet is prepared, the empty text box could be used to invite all to the next vigil.

Diocese (a) in possession of the bell brings it to the venue in procession – this procession could include music and symbols of the places visited and of the faith heritage characteristic of the diocese.

Diocese (b) receiving the bell comes in procession also with music and symbols to the meeting point.

Layout of the Ritual

This brief ritual should take place only as the bell is handed on from one diocese to another. Potentially the presider could be the local Bishop and the structure could be:

- Introduction
- Change over of 'Bell Bearers'
- Dialogue of giving and receiving the bell
- Congress Prayer
- Sign of peace
- Procession into the diocese



Introduction

When all have gathered the bell is rung for the last time by diocese (a) and placed on its plinth.

After a moment of silence diocese (a) intones the chorus of the Congress Hymn.

The bell bearers of diocese (a) remove the IEC2012 High-Vis jackets and in silence, with dignity and ceremony pass them on to the awaiting bearers from diocese (b)

Dialogue of giving and receiving the bell

The members of diocese (a) pray:

By the ringing of this bell
 And the witness of our lives
 God has called to many in our diocese and has strengthened our faith.
 May the Lord bless you who have joined in this pilgrimage.

May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back.
 May the sun shine warm upon your face
 and the rain fall softly on your fields.
 And until we meet again, May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.

The members of diocese (b) pray:

May the Lord help you who have begun this journey of faith
 to remain always a sign of God's presence to many,
 and as we continue this pilgrimage
 we do so in communion with you
 and with all who hear the call of this bell,
 all whose lives are being touched by the presence of God.

Presider of Diocese (b) invites all to pray the Congress Prayer.

In communion with the pilgrim Church worldwide let us pray the
 Eucharistic Congress Prayer.

All:

Lord Jesus,
 You were sent by the Father
 to gather together those who are scattered.
 You came among us, doing good and bringing healing,
 announcing the Word of salvation
 and giving the Bread which lasts forever.
 Be our companion on life's pilgrim way.
 May your Holy Spirit inflame our hearts,
 enliven our hope and open our minds,
 so that together with our sisters and brothers in faith
 we may recognise you in the Scriptures
 and in the breaking of bread.
 May your Holy Spirit transform us into one body
 and lead us to walk humbly on the earth,
 in justice and love,
 as witnesses of your resurrection.
 In communion with Mary,
 whom you gave to us as our Mother at the foot of the cross,
 through you may all praise, honour and blessing
 be to the Father
 in the Holy Spirit and in the Church,
 Now and forever. Amen

Presider

Let us offer one another a sign of peace and fellowship.

Conclusion

Bell bearers move into position and take the Bell. The Bell is rung for the first time by diocese (b).

Presider:

For a moment in silence
 let us pray for one another and for all who live in our diocese,
 that when we hear the peal of this bell,
 carried on its pilgrim journey,
 we will be reminded of the voice of God
 calling us to gather in communion with Christ and with one another.

After a few moments of silence the Congress Hymn is intoned and the procession moves off with the Bell.

Celebration of Handing on the Eucharistic Congress Bell Pilgrim Participation Leaflet:

Eucharistic Congress Hymn (Chorus)

Though we are many, we are one body,
We who come to share this living bread.
Cup of salvation, shared for all the nations,
Nourishing us now and evermore.



Handing on the Eucharistic Congress Bell

All Members Of Diocese (a) pray:

By the ringing of this bell
And the witness of our lives
God has called to many in our diocese
and has strengthened our faith.
May the Lord bless you who have joined
in this pilgrimage.

May the road rise up to meet you, may
the wind be ever at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face
and the rain fall softly on your fields.
And until we meet again, May God hold
you in the hollow of his hand.

Receiving the Eucharistic Congress Bell

All Members Of Diocese (b) pray:

May the Lord help you who have begun
this journey of faith
to continue to be a sign of God's presence
to many,
and as we continue this pilgrimage
we do so in communion with you
and with all who hear the call of this bell,
all whose lives are being touched by the
presence of God.

The Eucharistic Congress Prayer

All:

Lord Jesus,
You were sent by the Father
to gather together
those who are scattered.
You came among us, doing good and
bringing healing,
announcing the Word of salvation
and giving the Bread which lasts forever.
Be our companion on life's pilgrim way.
May your Holy Spirit inflame our hearts,
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May your Holy Spirit transform us into
one body
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in justice and love,
as witnesses of your resurrection.
In communion with Mary,
whom you gave to us as our Mother at
the foot of the cross,
through you may all praise,
honour and blessing
be to the Father
in the Holy Spirit and in the Church,
Now and forever. Amen

