

Reflection on the National Eucharistic Congress and Pilgrimage (Adoremus)

I was part of a delegation of parishioners who had the privilege of attending two glorious days in Liverpool. The objective of the Congress was to give us a unique opportunity in the life of the Church to gather and reflect on the centrality of the Eucharist and particularly to explore the place of Eucharistic adoration. In addition to the main events there were numerous parallel programmes e.g. Adoremus Youth Congress and various exhibitions.

On the Saturday we were welcomed with opening prayers by Bishop Robert Byrne and Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP.

The highlight of the day for many of us were the two keynote addresses by Bishop Robert Barron, a world-renowned philosopher and lecturer. The theme of his talks were:

- (1) Sainthood, sanctity and what makes holy
- (2) The Mystery of the Mass.

The response to his lectures in the auditorium was palpable.

The day concluded with Exposition and Benediction and a reflection by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

On Sunday a solemn Pilgrimage Mass was held in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King with Cardinal Vincent Nichols as the celebrant, together with many bishops and priests. Those of us in attendance experienced a very joyous and religious encounter, culminating in the Outdoor Eucharistic Procession. The slight rain did not dampen our enthusiasm, and the final stage of the Procession along Hope Street, where we could view all the hierarchy celebrating Benediction will be something I will always treasure.

My final reflection is something I overheard from a bystander. *"It is great to see we Catholics coming out of the shadows and openly professing our faith once again!"*.

I trust that *Adoremus* will maintain its legacy and build the foundations for a brighter future.

G.M.