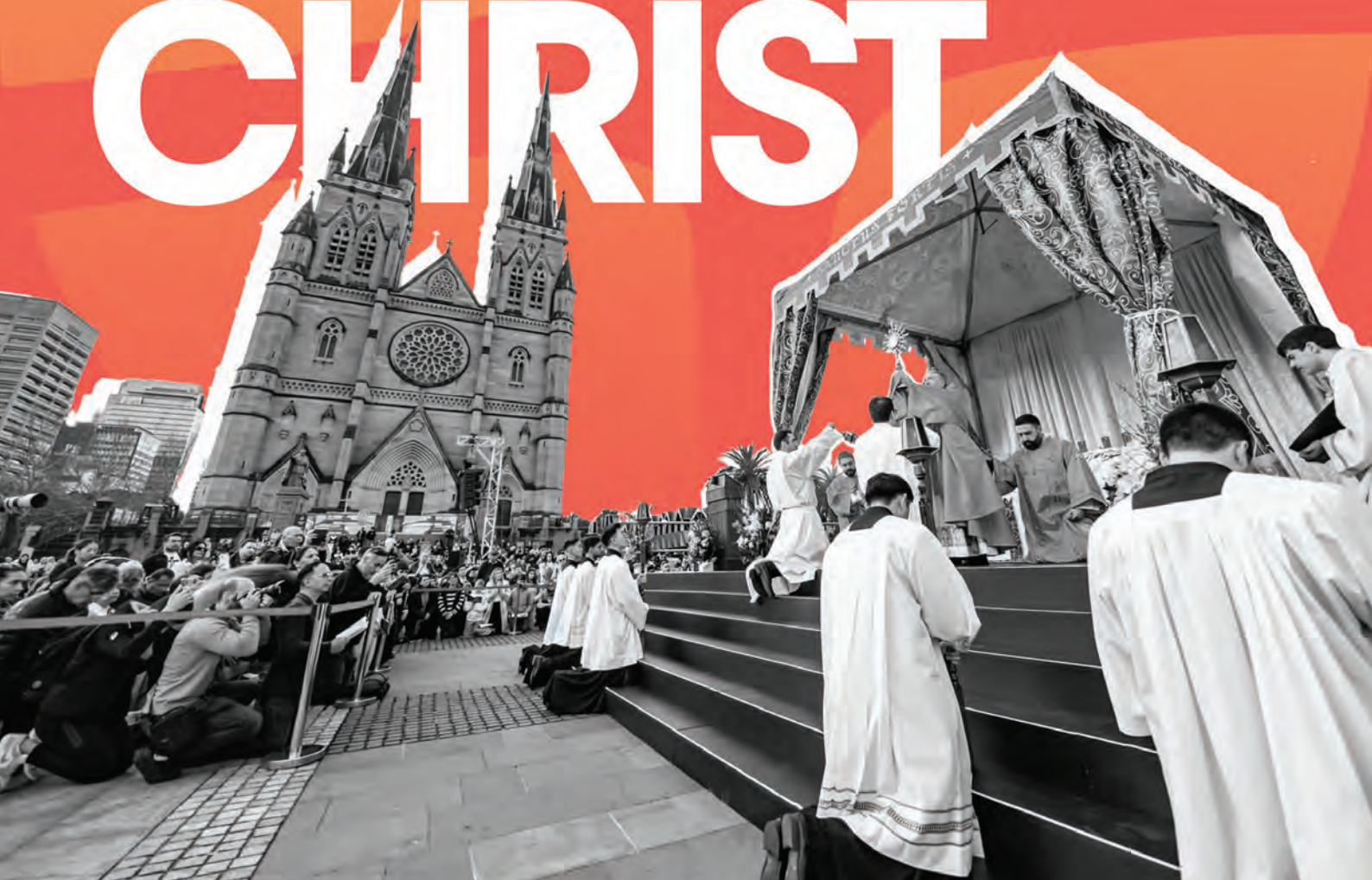


**Walking with Christ:
A Parish Companion for
Eucharistic Renewal**

Preparing for the International Eucharistic Congress 2028



WALKING WITH CHRIST



A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP RICHARD UMBERS

As we journey together toward the International Eucharistic Congress in Sydney in 2028, we are invited to deepen our faith in Jesus Christ, truly present in the Most Holy Eucharist.

This Parish Companion has been prepared as a resource to support Eucharistic renewal in parishes and communities in the lead-up to the Congress. I encourage you to use it to pray, reflect and share with fellow parishioners the insights and stirrings that its reflections inspire.

May this resource help us to grow in love for the Eucharist, to be renewed and nourished by Christ's Body and Blood, and to bear witness to his love in our parishes and in the world.

Yours in Christ,

+ Richard Umbers

Most Rev Richard Umbers

Secretary General,
International Eucharistic Congress 2028
(Eucharist 28)





INTRODUCTION

Throughout the Gospels, we encounter people whose lives were transformed when they met Jesus. Some met Him by the lakeshore, others encountered Him on dusty roads, in crowded homes, or in moments of suffering and need.

Today we encounter the same Jesus in the Eucharist.

The Church teaches that Christ is truly, really, and substantially present in the Blessed Sacrament. Every Mass is an encounter with the living Lord who gives Himself completely for the life of the world.

Yet many Catholics long for a deeper understanding of the Eucharist and a more personal relationship with Jesus present in this sacrament of love.

This companion has been prepared to help answer that desire.

Over the coming weeks we will explore the mystery of the Eucharist through Scripture, Church teaching, prayer, personal reflection, and group discussion. Together we will deepen our understanding of what the Church believes and discover how the Eucharist shapes every aspect of Christian life.

This journey forms part of our preparation for the International Eucharistic Congress 2028, when the universal Church will be invited to reflect anew upon the gift of the Eucharist.

May this first step on the journey to the Congress renew your faith, strengthen your hope, and deepen your love for Jesus Christ.

HOW TO USE THIS COMPANION

This Companion is designed to accompany our journey towards the International Eucharistic Congress in 2028.

The **six modules** may be used in whatever rhythm best suits your parish, school, ministry, family, or community. **While a weekly or fortnightly gathering is recommended** to allow time for prayer, reflection, and discussion between sessions, you are welcome to work through the resource at whatever pace best suits your community.

Each module is designed for a gathering of around **60–90 minutes** and may be used individually, within families, in parish groups, ministry teams, schools, and other Catholic communities.

Through these six modules, participants are invited to deepen their understanding of the Eucharist, grow in friendship with Jesus Christ, and renew their mission as His disciples. Together, the sessions explore Christ's presence in the Eucharist, the Mass as sacrifice and memorial, the communion of the Church, the life of prayer and Eucharistic Adoration, and the mission and witness that flow from Eucharistic discipleship.

Whether used individually or in groups, may this Companion help prepare our hearts to walk more closely with Christ, present in the Blessed Sacrament, and to bear joyful witness to Him in our communities.

You can also explore additional videos, testimonies, articles, prayers, and parish resources on the International Eucharistic Congress 2028 website: **eucharist28.org**



A photograph of a priest with grey hair, wearing a white shirt and a bright yellow stole with gold embroidery. He is looking upwards with a contemplative expression. The background is a warm, golden-brown architectural detail, possibly part of a church interior.

OUR JOURNEY WITH CHRIST

Module One:

The Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

Discover the Church's teaching on the Real Presence and deepen your faith in Christ truly present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Module Two:

The Mass as Sacrifice and Memorial

Explore how the Eucharist makes present Christ's saving sacrifice and unites us to His Paschal Mystery.

Module Three:

The Eucharist Builds the Church

Reflect on how Holy Communion unites believers as the Body of Christ and strengthens the Church's life and mission.

Module Four:

Adoration and Prayer Before the Blessed Sacrament

Learn how time spent in Christ's Eucharistic presence deepens prayer, discipleship, and friendship with the Lord.

Module Five:

The Eucharist and Mission

Discover how receiving Christ sends us forth to serve others and live the Gospel in daily life.

Module Six:

Witnesses to the Living Christ

Reflecting on Eucharistic witness, public expressions of faith, and our call to proclaim Christ in the world.

Final Week of Reflection

A week of prayer, reconciliation, Eucharistic Adoration, and spiritual preparation as we ready ourselves to participate in the International Eucharistic Congress.



MODULE ONE: THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCCHARIST

Week 1

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ,

You remain with Your Church in the Blessed
Sacrament. Open our minds to understand
the gift of the Eucharist and open our hearts
to receive You with faith and love.

As we begin this journey towards the
International Eucharistic Congress 2028,
renew within us a deep reverence for Your
presence.

May we recognise You in the breaking of the
bread, worship You with grateful hearts, and
follow You faithfully as Your disciples.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

John 6:51–58

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh".

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day, for my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which the ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever".

Spend a few moments in silence reflecting on the passage.

TEACHING SECTION

Christ Truly Present

At the heart of the Catholic faith is the belief that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Eucharist. When the priest speaks the words of consecration during Mass, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.

This belief is not merely symbolic. The Church teaches that Christ is present "truly, really and substantially" in the Eucharist. Although the appearances of bread and wine remain, their deepest reality is transformed into Christ Himself. This mystery has traditionally been called 'transubstantiation'.

The roots of this teaching are found in Sacred Scripture. All four Gospels recount the feeding of the five thousand. The Synoptic Gospels, together with St Paul, hand on the words of institution while John's Gospel gives us the Bread of Life discourse. In John's Gospel, Jesus declares: "I am the bread of life".

The Second Vatican Council described the Eucharist as a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, and a paschal banquet in which Christ Himself is received.

Pope Paul VI reminded the Church that Christ's presence in the Eucharist is a mystery grasped through faith. While the Eucharist brings about communion among believers, it is much more than a symbol of unity. Christ Himself is present under the appearances of bread and wine.

St John Paul II taught that faith requires us to approach the Eucharist knowing that we are approaching Christ Himself. It is His presence that gives meaning to every other aspect of the Mass.

Pope Benedict XVI described the Eucharist as introducing into creation a profound transformation that ultimately points towards the renewal of the whole world.

More recently, Pope Leo XIV reminded the Church that Christ becomes present in the Eucharist in order to transform us into Himself. The Eucharist is therefore not only a gift to be received but a mystery that changes us from within.

Whenever we attend Mass, spend time in Adoration, or receive Holy Communion, we encounter the same Jesus who walked the roads of Galilee, suffered on Calvary, rose from the dead, and now reigns in glory.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Spend some time quietly reflecting on the following:

1. What does it mean to me that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist?

2. When have I felt particularly close to Christ during Mass or Eucharistic Adoration?

3. Are there aspects of the Church's teaching on the Real Presence that I find difficult to understand or believe?

4. How might a deeper faith in Christ's Eucharistic presence change the way I participate at Mass?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share with others in your group:

1. What stood out to you most from the Scripture passage or teaching?

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2. Why do you think belief in the Real Presence is central to Catholic life?

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3. How can our parish help those of faith and those who are not of Catholic faith grow in awareness of Christ's presence in the Eucharist?

4. What practical obstacles prevent Catholics from encountering Christ more deeply in the Mass?

PRACTICAL ACTION FOR THIS MODULE

Choose one or more of the following:

- Attend an additional weekday Mass.
- Spend at least fifteen minutes in silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.
- Read and pray with John Chapter 6.
- Visit the church during the week and spend time quietly acknowledging Christ's presence in the tabernacle.
- Pray each day: "Lord Jesus, deepen my faith in Your presence in the Eucharist".

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
We thank You for the gift of the Eucharist.

Increase our faith in Your Real Presence.
Help us to approach the altar with reverence, receive
You with gratitude, and worship You with love.

May this journey prepare us to walk with You more
closely, to witness to You more boldly, and to welcome
the Church from around the world to Australia in 2028.

Mary, Woman of the Eucharist,
pray for us. Amen.



A close-up photograph of a priest's hands and torso. The priest is wearing a red cassock with gold trim and a white shirt. He is holding a golden chalice in his left hand and a host (a small, round, white wafer) in his right hand, positioned just above the chalice. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a church interior. White, hand-drawn style lines are overlaid on the image, framing the central action.

MODULE TWO: THE MASS AS SACRIFICE AND MEMORIAL

Week 2

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord Jesus,

At the Last Supper You gave us the gift of the
Eucharist and entrusted to Your Church the
memorial of Your saving sacrifice.

Open our hearts to understand more deeply
the mystery we celebrate at every Mass.

Help us to recognise Your love poured
out on the Cross, made present for us
in the Eucharist.

May our participation in the Mass draw us
ever closer to You and transform us into
faithful disciples.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Luke 22:14-20

"When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God".

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes".

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me". And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood".

Spend a few moments in silence reflecting on the passage.

TEACHING SECTION

The Gift of Christ's Sacrifice

When Catholics gather for Mass, we do much more than remember an event from the past. We enter into the mystery of Christ's saving sacrifice.

In John's Gospel, Jesus describes Himself as the living bread who came down from heaven and who gives His flesh for the life of the world. These words point not only to the Eucharist but also to His

sacrifice on the Cross. Christ freely offered His life so that humanity might share in God's life forever.

At the Last Supper, Jesus anticipated this sacrifice when He took bread and wine and declared: "This is my body, which is given for you".

In these words, Jesus revealed that His death would not be an accident of history but a loving act of self-giving for the salvation of the world.

The Church teaches that the Eucharist is a sacrifice because it makes present Christ's once-for-all sacrifice on Calvary. The sacrifice of the Cross is not repeated. Rather, through the power of the Holy Spirit, it becomes sacramentally present to us in every celebration of the Mass.

This is why the Church speaks of the Mass as a memorial. In the Bible, a memorial is far more than a recollection of the past. It is a making present of God's saving action. When we celebrate the Eucharist, Christ's Paschal Mystery – His Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension – is made present and effective in our lives today.

The Eucharist therefore unites heaven and earth, past, present, and future. At every Mass we are drawn into Christ's saving work and given a foretaste of the eternal banquet of heaven. The Eucharist points us towards the future fulfilment of God's Kingdom while nourishing us in the present.

St Oscar Romero, who gave his life in service of the Gospel, understood that the Eucharist both consoles and challenges us. Nourished by Christ's Body and Blood, we are called to offer our own lives in service, sacrifice, justice, and love. The Mass strengthens us not only to receive Christ's gift but also to become a gift for others.

Every Eucharist proclaims the same truth: Christ gave Himself for us, and He invites us to unite our lives with His.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Spend some time quietly reflecting on the following:

- 1. What does it mean to me that the sacrifice of Christ is made present at every Mass?

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- 2. How does understanding the Mass as a sacrifice deepen my participation in it?

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3. What aspects of my life might Christ be inviting me to place on the altar with Him?

4. How does the Eucharist strengthen me to live sacrificially for others?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share with others in your group:

1. What stood out to you most from the Scripture passage or teaching?

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2. Why is it important to understand that the Mass is more than a remembrance?

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3. How does the Eucharist connect the Last Supper, Calvary, and our lives today?

4. In what ways can participation in the Mass help us grow in generosity and self-giving love?

PRACTICAL ACTION FOR THIS MODULE

Choose one or more of the following:

- Attend a weekday Mass and reflect on the offertory prayers.
- Spend time reading the Passion narrative in one of the Gospels.
- Offer a personal sacrifice for a particular intention.
- Pray the Stations of the Cross.
- At your next Mass, consciously unite a personal burden, challenge, or hope with Christ's sacrifice.
- Consider who God is calling you to serve by sacrificing your own comfort, time or preferences this week.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
You gave Your Body for us and poured out
Your Blood for the salvation of the world.

Teach us to enter more deeply into the
mystery of the Mass. May we never take for
granted the gift of Your sacrifice and love.

Strengthen us through the Eucharist
to become people of generosity,
compassion, and service.

May our lives be united with Yours,
now and always.

Amen.





MODULE THREE: THE EUCHARIST BUILDS THE CHURCH

Week 3

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord Jesus,
You call us into communion with Yourself
and with all who belong to Your Body,
the Church.

Through the gift of the Eucharist, gather
us more closely to You and strengthen the
bonds of faith, hope, and charity among us.

Teach us to live as one family, united in Your
love and committed to Your mission.

May this time of prayer and reflection renew
our desire to serve You and one another.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

1 Corinthians 10:16–17

"The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread".

Spend a few moments in silence reflecting on the passage.

TEACHING SECTION

One Bread, One Body

The Eucharist is a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, but it is never a private experience. Whenever we gather for Mass and receive Holy Communion, Christ draws us into communion not only with Himself but also with one another.

St Paul reminds us that because we share in the one Bread, we become one Body. The Eucharist builds the Church by gathering believers into a communion of faith, hope, and love.

One of the earliest witnesses to this truth is St Ignatius of Antioch, a bishop who lived at the beginning of the second century. Arrested for his faith and taken to Rome for martyrdom, Ignatius spent his final journey writing letters to Christian communities, encouraging them to remain faithful to Christ and united with one another.

Ignatius had learned the faith from those who had known the Apostles. Tradition tells us that he was a disciple of St John, the beloved disciple who had been

present at the Last Supper and at the foot of the Cross. Ignatius therefore received a living faith in Christ and a profound reverence for the Eucharist.

As he prepared to give his life for Christ, Ignatius reflected deeply on the meaning of the Eucharist. He saw that Jesus had given everything for the life of the world and believed that every Christian was called to respond with the same spirit of self-giving love.

For Ignatius, the Eucharist was not simply something to be received; it was a way of life. Christ pours Himself out completely for us in the Eucharist, and in doing so gathers us together as His Body, the Church. Receiving Holy Communion means allowing our lives to be shaped by Christ's self-giving love.

The Eucharist teaches us that we belong to one another. It challenges us to move beyond individualism and to recognise that our faith is lived within a community. We worship together, pray together, suffer together, and rejoice together because we are united in Christ.

This unity extends beyond our local parish. Every celebration of the Eucharist unites us with Catholics throughout the world and across the generations. The saints who have gone before us, the faithful who worship today, and those who will come after us are all joined together in the one Body of Christ.

St Ignatius reminds us that to be Christian is to be Eucharistic. To receive Christ in Holy Communion is to allow Him to transform our hearts, deepen our communion with others, and strengthen our commitment to serve the Church and the world.

As we prepare for the International Eucharistic Congress 2028, we are invited to ask ourselves: How is the Eucharist shaping our parish community? How is it helping us become one Body in Christ?

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Spend some time quietly reflecting on the following:

1. What does it mean for me to belong to the Body of Christ?

2. How has participation in the Eucharist strengthened my connection to the Church?

3. Are there relationships in my family, parish, workplace, or community that need healing or reconciliation?

4. How is Christ calling me to live more fully in communion with others?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share with others in your group:

1. What aspect of St Ignatius' witness inspires or challenges you?

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2. Why do you think the Eucharist is essential for the unity of the Church?

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3. What are some signs of a truly Eucharistic parish community?

4. How can our parish better foster a spirit of welcome, belonging, and communion?

PRACTICAL ACTION FOR THIS MODULE

Choose one or more of the following:

- Introduce yourself to someone at Mass whom you do not know.
- Pray for unity within your parish and the universal Church.
- Reach out to someone who may feel isolated or disconnected from the community.
- Reflect on whether there is a relationship that needs reconciliation and take a step towards healing, including through the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Offer a prayer each day for Christians throughout the world who suffer persecution for their faith.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you gather us into one Body through the gift of the Eucharist.

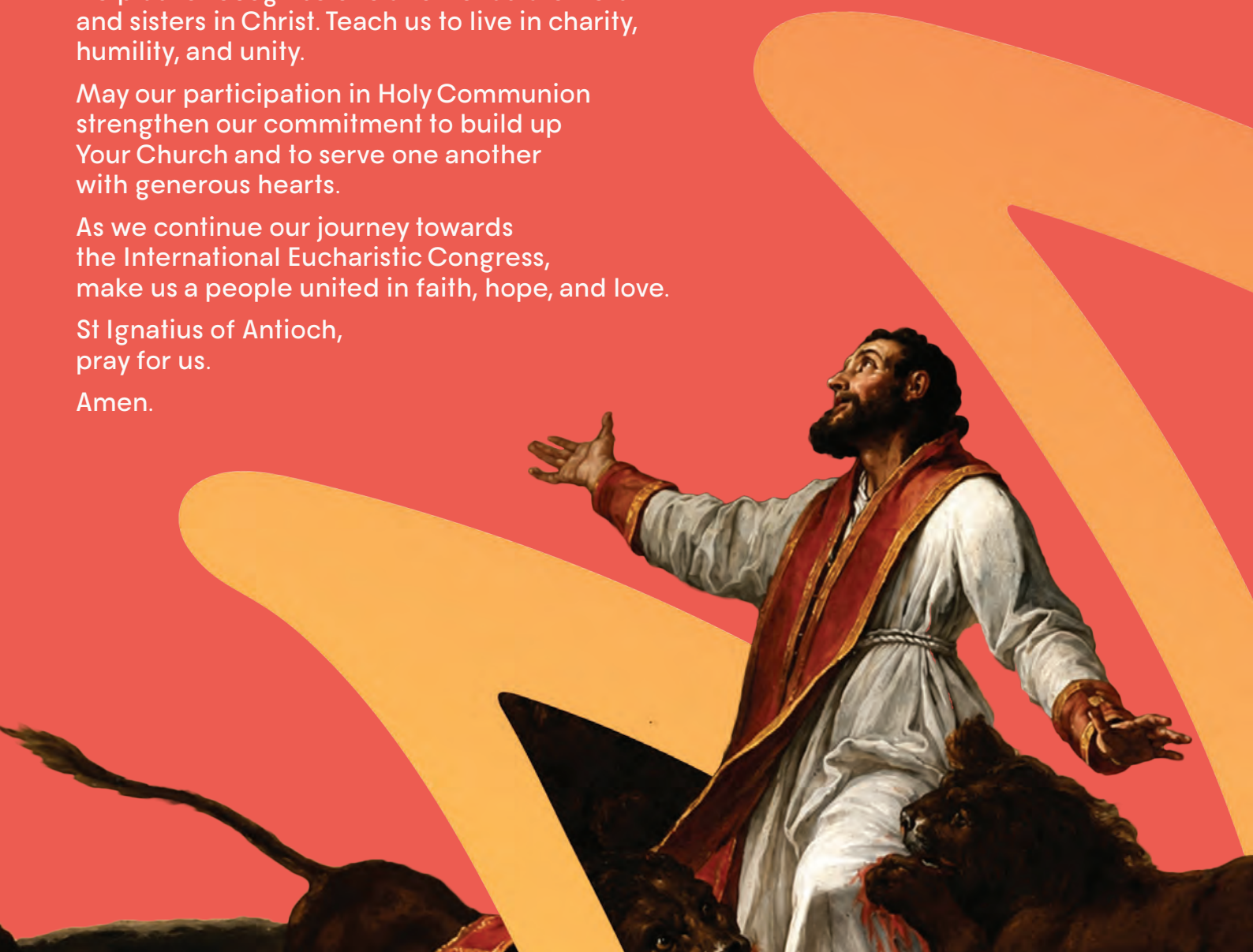
Help us to recognise one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Teach us to live in charity, humility, and unity.

May our participation in Holy Communion strengthen our commitment to build up Your Church and to serve one another with generous hearts.

As we continue our journey towards the International Eucharistic Congress, make us a people united in faith, hope, and love.

St Ignatius of Antioch, pray for us.

Amen.





MODULE FOUR: ADORATION AND PRAYER BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Week 4

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord Jesus,
Present in the Blessed Sacrament,
You wait for us with patience and love.

In the silence of Your presence,
teach us to listen to Your voice,
to rest in Your love, and to open our hearts to
Your grace.

May this time of reflection deepen our
friendship with You and awaken within us a
greater desire to remain
close to You always.

Amen

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Luke 10:38–42

"Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into their home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me". But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her".

Spend a few moments in silence reflecting on the passage.

TEACHING SECTION

Remaining with the Lord

Throughout the Gospels, we see people drawn into the presence of Jesus. Some listened to Him teach from a hillside. Others followed Him along dusty roads. Some sat quietly at His feet. Their lives were changed simply by being with Him.

Today we are invited into that same encounter through Eucharistic Adoration. Adoration prolongs the worship offered in the Mass and draws us back to a fuller participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

The Church teaches that Christ is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. Because He is truly present, we can come before Him in prayer, worship Him, speak to Him from our hearts, and rest quietly in His presence.

The Eucharist is much more than a reminder of past events. Through the mystery of the Mass, Christ's saving work is made present to us. The Eucharist unites heaven and earth, past and present, time and eternity. Every celebration of the Mass draws us into the mystery of Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection and gives us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet.

This same mystery continues beyond Mass in Eucharistic Adoration. As we kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, we stand in the presence of the risen Lord. We join our prayer to that of the universal Church and are united with all who worship Christ throughout the world.

The Eucharist also reminds us that we are not alone in our faith. Through Christ we are united with the saints in heaven, the faithful on earth, and all who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith. In Adoration we are drawn into this great communion of love that extends beyond time and space.

Many people come before the Blessed Sacrament seeking answers. Others come carrying burdens, worries, or grief. Still others come simply to spend time with the Lord. Whatever brings us to Adoration, Christ welcomes us.

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament does not require many words. Sometimes the most fruitful prayer is simply to remain with Jesus. As friends grow closer through spending time together, so too our friendship with Christ deepens when we remain in His presence.

Eucharistic Adoration teaches us to listen. In a busy world filled with noise and distraction, Christ invites us to be still. He reminds us that our worth comes not from what we do but from who we are: beloved sons and daughters of God.

The saints understood this well. Throughout the centuries, countless men and women have discovered that time spent before the Blessed Sacrament strengthens faith, renews hope, and deepens charity. Adoration does not draw us away from the world. Rather, it prepares us to return to the world with hearts transformed by Christ.

As we prepare for the International Eucharistic Congress in 2028, we are invited to rediscover the beauty of simply being with Jesus, truly present in the Eucharist.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Spend some time quietly reflecting on the following:

1. What place does silent prayer have in my relationship with Christ?

2. When have I experienced God's presence most deeply in prayer?

3. What distractions or obstacles make it difficult for me to spend time with the Lord?

4. How might regular Eucharistic Adoration strengthen my faith and discipleship?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share with others in your group:

1. What stood out to you most from the Scripture passage or teaching?

2. What has been your experience of Eucharistic Adoration?

3. Why is silence important in the spiritual life?

4. How can our parish encourage a deeper culture of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament?

PRACTICAL ACTION FOR THIS MODULE

Choose one or more of the following:

- Spend at least thirty minutes in Eucharistic Adoration.
- Visit the church during the week and spend time praying before the tabernacle.
- Begin each day with five minutes of silent prayer.
- Read and pray with Luke 10:38–42, imagining yourself sitting at the feet of Jesus.
- Keep a journal of insights, prayers, or inspirations received during times of silence with the Lord.
- Invite someone to join you in Adoration

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
Present in the Blessed Sacrament,
we thank You for the gift of Your presence.

Teach us to seek You in silence,
to trust You in times of uncertainty,
and to remain close to You each day.

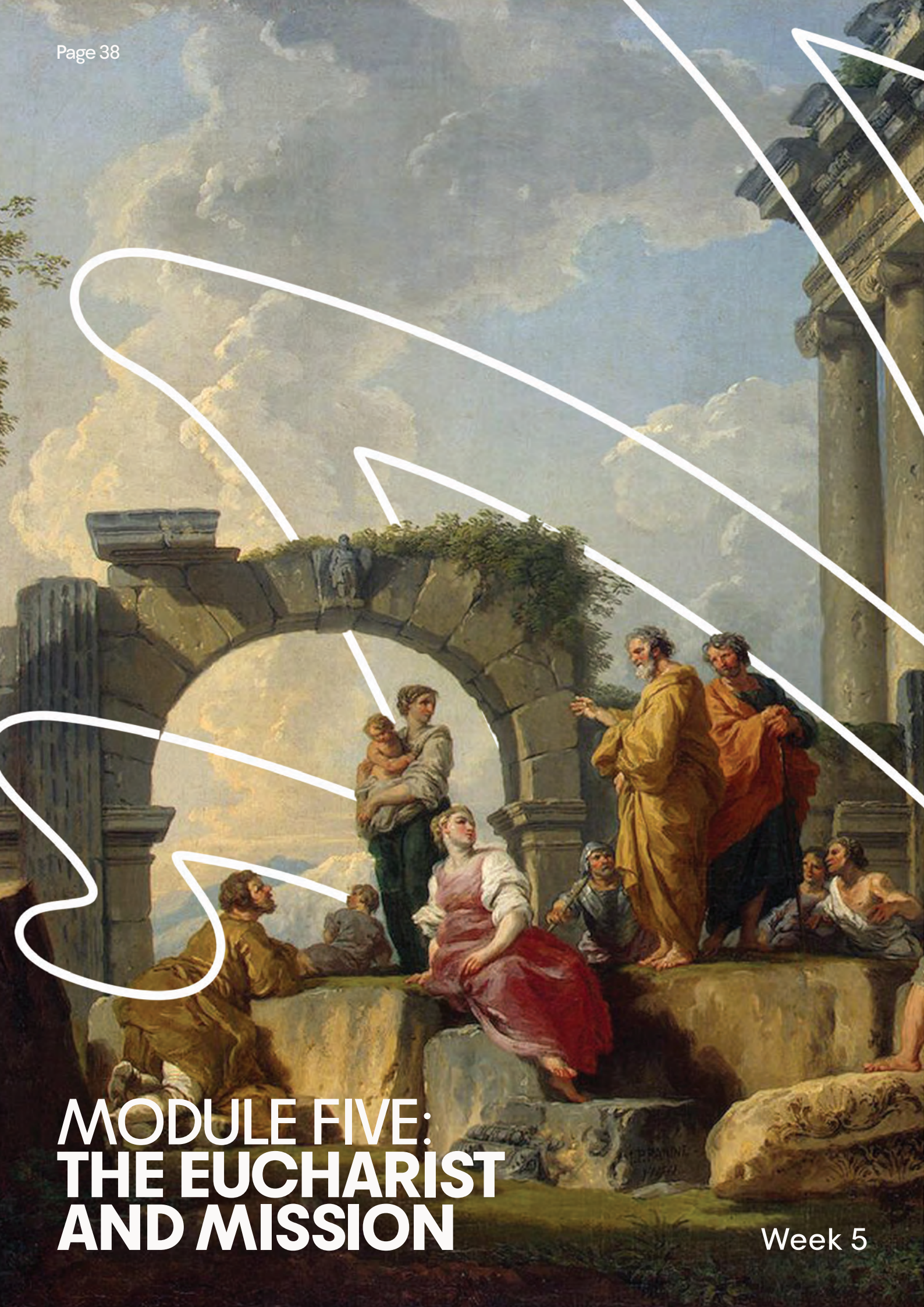
May our hearts become attentive to Your voice
and our lives be transformed by Your love.

As we continue our journey towards
the International Eucharistic Congress,
draw us ever deeper into communion with You.

Mary, Woman of the Eucharist,
pray for us.

Amen.





MODULE FIVE: THE EUCHARIST AND MISSION

Week 5

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord Jesus,
You nourish us with Your Body and Blood
and send us forth to proclaim Your love.

Open our hearts to recognise You
both in the Eucharist and in those we
encounter each day.

Help us to become faithful missionary
disciples, ready to serve others with
generosity, compassion, and courage.

May the grace we receive at Your altar
bear fruit in our homes, workplaces,
parishes, and communities.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Matthew 25:35–40

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me'".

Spend a few moments in silence reflecting on the passage.

TEACHING SECTION

Sent Forth by Christ

Every Mass ends with a mission.

Having heard God's Word and received Christ in the Eucharist, we are sent forth to live what we have celebrated. The dismissal at Mass is not merely the conclusion of a liturgy; it is a commissioning. Christ nourishes us so that we may become His presence in the world.

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life, but it is never meant to remain within the walls of the church. The Christ whom we encounter at the altar sends us to encounter Him in our neighbour,

especially in those who are poor, suffering, lonely, forgotten, or in need.

One of the clearest examples of this Eucharistic spirituality in Australia is St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Mary MacKillop was deeply devoted to the Eucharist. Those who knew her recalled the many hours she spent in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. It was in the presence of Christ that she found strength, guidance, and the courage to persevere through difficulties and opposition.

Yet Mary's prayer never became disconnected from the needs of the world. She understood that the Christ she adored in the Eucharist was the same Christ present in those who were poor, vulnerable, and forgotten. The Lord who called her into prayer also called her into service.

This conviction shaped her life and mission. Her well-known advice: "Never see a need without doing something about it".

Mary was grounded in her deep Eucharistic faith. She believed that love for Christ must always lead to love of neighbour and reminded her Sisters: "Never forget who it is you are following".

These two principles belong together. We serve others because we follow Jesus. We follow Jesus by learning to recognise Him in others.

The Eucharist therefore transforms how we see the world. When we receive Christ's Body and Blood, we are drawn into His self-giving love. We begin to see people not as strangers or problems to be solved, but as brothers and sisters loved by God.

The more deeply we enter into the Eucharist, the more we are challenged to become people of mercy, justice, compassion, and service. Christ gives Himself entirely for us and asks us to make our lives a gift for others.

As we prepare for the International Eucharistic Congress 2028, we are invited to ask ourselves: How is the Eucharist shaping the way I live? How is Christ sending me on mission? Who is He asking me to serve?

The Eucharist is not the end of the Christian journey. It is the beginning of a life transformed by Christ and poured out for the life of the world.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Spend some time quietly reflecting on the following:

- 1. How has my participation in the Eucharist influenced the way I treat others?

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- 2. Where do I encounter Christ in those around me?

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3. What needs do I see in my family, parish, workplace, or community?

4. How might Christ be inviting me to serve more generously?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share with others in your group:

1. What stands out to you about the witness of St Mary MacKillop?

2. Why is it important to connect Eucharistic worship with service of others?

3. How can our parish, chaplaincy or community become more visibly missionary and outward-looking?

4. What practical ways can we witness to Christ's love in our local community?

PRACTICAL ACTION FOR THIS MODULE

Choose one or more of the following:

- Perform a deliberate act of kindness or service for someone in need.
- Visit or contact someone who may be lonely, sick, or isolated.
- Volunteer with a parish ministry, charitable organisation, or outreach initiative.
- Pray each day for someone who is experiencing hardship.
- Reflect on St Mary MacKillop's words: "Never see a need without doing something about it" and respond to one need you encounter during the week or fortnight ahead.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,

You gave Yourself completely for the life of the world.

Fill us with the grace of the Eucharist
so that we may become instruments of Your love.

Help us to recognise You in those who are poor, suffering,
lonely, and in need.

Give us generous hearts, ready to serve without counting
the cost, and courageous faith, ready to witness to Your
Gospel wherever You send us.

May we never forget who it is we are following.

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, pray for us.

Amen.





MODULE SIX: WITNESSES TO THE LIVING CHRIST

Week 6

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ,
You walk with Your people throughout
every age.

You accompany us in moments of joy and
sorrow, strengthen us through Your presence
in the Eucharist, and call us to bear witness
to You before the world.

As we prepare for the
International Eucharistic Congress,
fill us with courage, faith, and joy.

May our lives proclaim Your goodness,
our words speak of Your love,
and our actions reflect Your mercy.

Lead us ever closer to You
and make us faithful witnesses
to Your Gospel.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Luke 24:28–35

"As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over". So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"

That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread".

Spend a few moments in silence reflecting on the passage.

TEACHING SECTION

Sent Forth by Christ

Throughout the Gospels, those who encountered Jesus were never left unchanged. The first disciples left their nets and followed Him, beginning a new life of discipleship. The Samaritan woman, having met Christ at the well, returned to her town and shared the good news of her encounter with others. On the road to Emmaus, the disciples recognised the risen Lord in the breaking of the bread and immediately returned to Jerusalem to proclaim what they had seen and heard. Again and again,

Scripture shows us that a genuine encounter with Christ leads naturally to witness and mission.

The same is true for us today. The Eucharist is not only a gift to be received but also a gift to be shared. At every Mass, having been nourished by Christ's Body and Blood, we are sent forth to live and proclaim the Gospel. He feeds us so that our lives may become a gift for others, strengthened by His presence, we are commissioned to carry Christ into our homes, workplaces, schools, parishes, and communities, becoming witnesses to His love in the world.

Another means of carrying Christ into the world is through a Eucharistic procession which is much more than a public gathering or a religious event. It is a visible proclamation of our faith in Jesus Christ truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. As Catholics walk together in prayer, song, and witness, they publicly affirm what they believe: that Christ remains with His people and continues to draw all people to Himself.

Throughout the history of the Church, Eucharistic processions have been moments of prayer, thanksgiving, evangelisation, and public witness. They remind us that our faith is not confined to church buildings but is meant to be lived and proclaimed in every aspect of life.

When we process through the streets of our city, we bear witness to the hope that the world longs for. We acknowledge that Christ is Lord not only of our hearts but of every human life, every family, every community, and every nation.

This witness is especially important today. Many people are searching for meaning, belonging, forgiveness, and hope. Others may have drifted away from faith or never encountered Christ personally. A simple act of public witness can become an invitation for someone to take a first step towards God.

The International Eucharistic Congress 2028 will provide a unique opportunity for the Church in Australia to welcome pilgrims from around the world and to proclaim anew the beauty of the Eucharist.

Our preparation for that moment begins now through prayer, conversion, discipleship, and mission.

A Eucharistic process can be is one important step on that journey.

The strongest testimony we offer in such a witness is not a banner, a hymn, or a procession route. It is a life transformed by Christ.

As followers of Christ, our lives should bear witness to the transformation that comes from encountering Him in the Eucharist. Others should be able to recognise in us a faith that trusts in God even amid

uncertainty, a hope that perseveres through difficulties, and a charity that is expressed in generous service to others. They should encounter a joy that flows from knowing Christ and a willingness to share the Good News with those around us. In this way, our words and actions become a living testimony to the presence of Christ at work within us.

The Eucharist always leads outward. Christ gathers us so that He may send us. He feeds us so that our lives may become a gift for others. He walks with us so that we may help others discover His presence.

As we prepare for the International Eucharistic Congress 2028, we are invited to renew our commitment to live as missionary disciples, witnessing joyfully to Christ wherever He sends us.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Spend some time quietly reflecting on the following:

1. How has my understanding of the Eucharist grown through this journey?

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2. In what ways has Christ been inviting me to deeper discipleship?

3. What opportunities do I have to witness to my faith in everyday life?

4. Who might God be calling me to invite, encourage, or accompany in faith?

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GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Share with others in your group:

1. Looking back over the previous modules, what has impacted you most deeply?

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2. What does it mean to be a Eucharistic witness today?

3. Why do public expressions of faith matter?

4. How can our parish continue this journey of Eucharistic renewal in the lead up to the International Eucharistic Congress in 2028??

PRACTICAL ACTION FOR THIS MODULE

Choose one or more of the following:

- Invite a family member, friend, neighbour, or inactive Catholic to join you in a Eucharistic procession taking place in your city or diocese.
- Share with someone how your faith has been strengthened through such a journey.
- Pray each day for those who will encounter the witness of the Church through such public devotion.
- Participate in a parish Holy Hour or time of Eucharistic Adoration.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
We thank You for walking with us throughout this journey.

You have nourished us with Your Body and Blood,
strengthened us through Your Word,
and renewed us in faith, hope, and love.

As we prepare for the International Eucharistic Congress,
help us to witness boldly and joyfully to Your presence.

May our lives reflect Your mercy,
our words proclaim Your truth,
and our actions reveal Your love.

Send us forth as missionary disciples,
ready to serve Your Church and proclaim Your Gospel.

May our preparation for the International Eucharistic
Congress lead us ever deeper into the mystery of the
Eucharist and ready our hearts to welcome the universal
Church to Australia in 2028.

Mary, Woman of the Eucharist,
pray for us.

Amen.



FINAL WEEK OF PREPARATION

As we conclude this journey of Eucharistic renewal, we invite you to spend this final week in prayer and reflection. Over the past months, we have reflected on Christ's presence in the Eucharist, entered more deeply into the mystery of the Mass, grown in communion with the Church, strengthened our life of prayer, and renewed our commitment to mission and witness.

Rather than following a set of activities this week, take time together to revisit what has most deeply spoken to you during this journey. Share the insights, graces or questions that have remained with you, and consider what God may be inviting you to carry forward.

This final week is an opportunity to place all that we have received into practice through prayer, reconciliation, Eucharistic Adoration, and spiritual preparation.

As you prepare to participate in the International Eucharistic Congress in 2028, we encourage you to reflect on the practical, spiritual, and missionary actions outlined throughout this Companion. Consider together what you might begin, strengthen or continue as ensure that individuals, families, ministries, schools, and parishes in preparation for the Congress.

May this week of quiet reflection be a time of grace, drawing us closer to Christ in the Eucharist and preparing our hearts to follow Him in faith, hope, and love.



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Explore additional videos, testimonies, articles, prayers, and parish resources on the Eucharist28 website:

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