



The Ark of the New Covenant, Brought Forth by the Youth

During the 2005 Youth Summit, young people expressed the desire that a symbolic object travel across the country in preparation for the International Eucharistic Congress. A committee of young people from Quebec City and Montreal was given the mandate to develop this idea. After careful thought, the committee suggested to the IEC Organising Committee the creation of an original artistic work.

The Ark, a novel gift for the spiritual preparation to the International Eucharistic Congress

The creation of this work of art will foster varied activities tied to the three main objectives of the Eucharistic Congress: catechesis on the Eucharist; communion with God in the Church through conscious and fervent participation in liturgy; and human solidarity and commitment to action for the transformation of our world.

- Catechesis: On a base resembling the hull of a boat rests a chest enriched with Eucharistic symbolism by icons referring to passages of the New Testament. The iconographic representations can serve as a basis for catecheses on the Eucharist.
- Liturgy: The top of the chest is built to receive either the Gospel, or a monstrance with the Eucharist, for different modes of liturgical prayer.
- Commitment: The Ark is built to receive the symbols of commitment of the faithful who will be invited to make theirs a “Eucharistic Chart”.

A document is being created to help support these three aspects. It will propose various ideas for activities and prayer.

A pilgrim Ark for the next two years

Having initiated the project, young people will receive the Ark during the Youth Summit in May 2006. They will be entrusted with the mission to accompany the Ark of the New Covenant and to gather all generations around Jesus Christ in whom we are called to be ONE. From the end of May 2006 until the event of the Congress in June 2008, the Ark of the New Covenant will undertake its pilgrimage across Canada.

A draft itinerary has been proposed based on intuitions and indications received about major events in our communities. The Ark will begin its pilgrimage in Quebec and as of January 2007 will set out for the other regions of the country. A walking pilgrimage is planned for the final weeks of the journey, in order to bring the Ark back to Quebec City for the International Eucharistic Congress. The itinerary will be refined based on requests received from different dioceses.

The Ark cast in our midst

Wherever we will make room at the heart of the life of our world, the Ark will gather people around liturgical celebrations and community events. It can be hosted in churches, religious institutions, schools as well as in community centres, retirement homes, public areas, private homes...

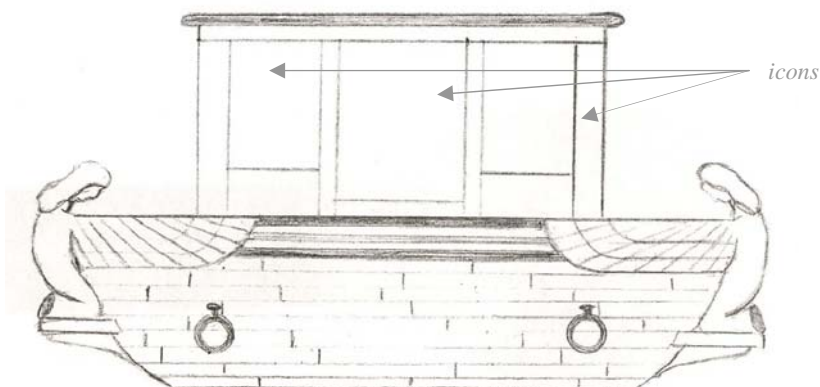
Each group, community, parish, movement is invited to prepare the activities and/or liturgies it desires, leaving room for creativity. It is foreseen that a young adult will accompany the Ark in its pilgrimage to help facilitate activities.



The website of the Congress will allow all to follow the pilgrimage of the Ark as well as share ideas for activities and testimonies about the passage of the Ark in our midst.

An Ark of multiple dimensions

The Ark measures approximately 1m in length, 0.6m in width and 0.6m in height. Its format allows it to be easily carried and to be integrated into various decors, sites, stages. Two long poles that can be inserted through the Ark create handles with which the Ark, weighing about 40kgs, can be carried by four people in processions or in other circumstances.



Rough sketch of the Ark of the New Covenant

Hosting the Ark in your diocese

The International Eucharistic Congress team is committed to supporting you in the coordination of the passage of the Ark in your diocese (transportation, coordination of a precise itinerary, ideas for activities) if necessary. You are the best placed to know the needs and the opportunities for hosting the Ark in your diocese, and so we count on you to determine a program for the Ark.

A vehicle and driver will be provided to accompany the Ark in its pilgrimage across the country and between the different sites within your diocese.

The originality of the Ark is a first in the history of International Eucharistic Congresses. We hope that it will foster creativity in the communities that will receive it and that it will allow to gather all generations. We thank you for sharing with us the hope borne of this initiative. We hope that it will be a privileged opportunity to gather many people around a Christian reflection on the discovery, the deepening and the celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, in order that it may truly be gift of God for the life of our world.