



History of Eucharistic Congresses

**Growth of the movement since its beginning at
Lille, France, in 1881.**

EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESSES are gatherings of ecclesiastics and laymen for the purpose of celebrating and glorifying the Holy Eucharist and of seeking the best means to spread its knowledge and love throughout the world.

The Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is one of the principal dogmas of the Catholic faith and is therefore of paramount importance as the most precious treasure that Christ has left to His Church as the centre of Catholic worship and as the source of Christian piety. The main advantage of these congresses has been in the concentration of the thoughts of the faithful upon the mystery of the altar, and in making known to them the means by which devotion towards the Holy Eucharist may be promoted and implanted in the hearts of the people.

The promoters of Eucharistic Congresses believe that, if during recent years devotion to the Holy Eucharist has become more widespread, if works of adoration, Confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament, and the practice of frequent Communion have spread rapidly and extensively, it must be ascribed in great part to these congresses.

The first gathering owed its inspiration to Bishop Gaston de Segur, and was held at Lille, France, June 21, 1881. The idea at first was merely local and met with few adherents, but it grew from year to year with an ever-increasing importance.