

This was a once in a life-time experience and well worth the trip! The Oregon Knights of Columbus State Officers made the 8 hour trip to the opposite corner of the State at the Oregon/Nevada border in the town of McDermitt in order to greet Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and the accompanying pilgrims making the trip along the St. Junipero Serra Route from the West.

Why would these men drive nearly 8 hours to the opposite side of the State where there's nothing but desert? It's what Knights do. A Knight of Columbus will drive 8 hours to desert terrain to greet their King, truly present in the Most Holy Eucharist. Devotion to the Eucharist is a top priority in the Knights of Columbus Order-wide. To be a Knight means to serve your King in a very noble way. We are Knights of the Eucharist!

Several State Officers took a road trip to McDermitt, NV where they were joined by many other Faithful Catholics from all over Oregon, including Bishop Liam Cary from the Diocese of Baker. It was wonderful to see many familiar faces there, including old friends from my hometown of Corvallis.

We all gathered in a small Catholic Church in McDermitt, Sacred Heart Catholic Church where we waited for the Eucharistic pilgrims. They ended up breaking down an hour away, which delayed them by 2 hours. However, this didn't dampen the spirits of the Oregon pilgrims who journeyed to this small border town. They took advantage of this opportunity to prepare themselves spiritually to welcome Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The Faithful gathered at Sacred Heart prayed 3 Rosaries with the intention of igniting a deeper longing and yearning and anticipation of the coming of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. We began the 3rd Rosary when we received word that the Eucharistic pilgrims had fixed their equipment and were on their way. During that 3rd Rosary, I could feel the excitement and anticipation in my heart that they were almost here and I was looking forward to it. When we saw the van pulling up, it was a moment of incredible excitement! At last, He was here! We spent a brief amount of time in Adoration before beginning our driving pilgrimage.

Seeing a long caravan of cars following Christ through the desert was a really profound experience. It was very neat, seeing so many cars on the road in an area most of us would otherwise not be, but for our Lord, we were following where He leads us.

We stayed the night in Burns, where the Knights of Columbus there put on a hearty dinner and a breakfast the following morning, after Mass celebrated by Bishop Cary. As State Deputy, it was also a wonderful experience to build better relationships with the Knights of Columbus in that area.

After breakfast, the driving Procession continued East. We stopped at Juntura for a short time of Adoration, then Vale, then Ontario. During all of this time, I could see a long entourage of cars following the Eucharistic pilgrims.

Mass in Ontario was incredible! Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church was filled to the brim and there was outside seating as well for overflow. We did a Eucharistic Procession around Blessed

Sacrament Catholic Church. The number of participants was beyond my ability to count. It was absolutely mind-blowing to see so many people there.

A driving Procession continued from Ontario across the Idaho border into Fruitland, where Bishop Christenson from the Diocese of Boise welcomed the Blessed Sacrament and the Eucharistic pilgrims. I shook hands with the Idaho State Deputy George Mesina and officially handed over the responsibility to him to accompany and support the Eucharistic pilgrims on their journey.

Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Fruitland held a reception after Adoration. For the Idaho Faithful, it was a welcome ceremony. For the Oregon Faithful, it was a celebration of the completion of their journey with the Blessed Sacrament.

These memories, I will treasure for a lifetime. Whenever I travel that road again, I will never forget this time when we traveled it following Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and the Eucharistic pilgrims. This was our Emmaus. Jesus accompanied us for a time, then He went on to accomplish other things. But because of the time He was with us, our lives will never be the same.

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Kenneth J. Anderson

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