

Pope names Slovakian cardinal as envoy to eucharistic congress

VATICAN CITY - Pope Benedict XVI has named Slovakian Cardinal Josef Tomko to be his representative at the International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec City.

The 84-year-old cardinal was president of the Vatican's office for organizing the international event from 2001 to 2007. Previously he served for 16 years as prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

The June 15-22 International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec coincides with the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec City.

Church and government officials had invited Pope Benedict to preside over the congress, and Canadian Catholics even launched an Internet petition urging him to attend.

The Vatican announced April 12 that the pope had appointed Cardinal Tomko to be his representative at the gathering, which will include speeches and workshops on different themes related to the Eucharist, opportunities for eucharistic adoration and Masses.

The theme of the congress is "The Eucharist, Gift of God for the Life of the World."