



DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

February 11, 2020

Greetings in Christ!

On December 8, 1870, Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, and this year marks the 150th anniversary of that declaration. After much prayer and consultation, I have discerned the need to declare a special year of prayer in honor of St. Joseph. St. Joseph has proven himself a miracle worker throughout the history of the church and also today. He answers prayers simply, humbly and thoroughly. It is with great excitement and confidence that I invite you to celebrate this year in honor of St. Joseph with me.

My hope is that this year will be an invitation for families and all people in our diocese to seek out St. Joseph's intercession. We have created a prayer card with prayers to St. Joseph and other helpful information for families and individuals to use in their homes to help foster daily prayer. The painting of St. Joseph, chosen for this year of prayer, shows Joseph's love for Jesus Christ, the Word of God. These cards will be delivered to your parishes in early March and will include copies for your parish, school and/or religious education programs.

One way to kick off this Holy Year is to promote and participate in the Solemn Nine Day Novena to St. Joseph which will take place March 10-19, 2020, at the Shrine of St. Joseph at Old St. Joseph Church on the St. Norbert College campus. To learn more about this novena, please visit:

<https://norbertines.org/SaintJosephNovena>

In this year of prayer, I ask that the Prayer to St. Joseph be prayed after the general intercessions or after the Prayer after Communion at Masses starting the weekend of March 21-22. A digital version of the prayer is available at www.gbdioc.org/stjoseph so you can print copies for each pew or include the text in your worship aids or bulletins. I would ask that you pray to St. Joseph with renewed devotion, seek his intercession, preach on him and include prayer to him on various occasions and gatherings with your parishioners throughout the year.

Early next month, I will share a pastoral letter and a short video to introduce and promote the Year of St. Joseph. I will also declare the Shrine of St. Joseph at Old St. Joseph Church as a pilgrimage location to obtain a partial indulgence throughout the Year of St. Joseph which will end on March 19, 2021. To learn more about the shrine, please visit: www.norbertines.org/stjosephshrine

It is my hope that men's groups and organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus, Esto Vir, That Man is You!, etc., will take a particularly active role in promoting prayer and devotion to St. Joseph, especially by calling fathers to lead prayer in their homes. Additional resources will be sent via Parish Pages and The Compass over the next few weeks to foster prayer and devotion to St. Joseph in your parish communities.

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Thank you in advance for your participation in and encouragement of this special year in honor of St. Joseph, marking 150 years since being declared Patron of the Universal Church. Active promotion of this to your families and parishioners will not only foster devotion to St. Joseph but also help form missionary disciples and raise up vocations from within our families, schools, religious education programs and parishes. May the Son of God and son of St. Joseph watch over and protect you in a special way throughout this special year devoted to St. Joseph.

Thank you for your ministry within the Diocese of Green Bay and for all that you do for Jesus and His Church. With prayers and best wishes, I remain

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David L. Ricken". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

Most Reverend David L. Ricken, DD, JCL
Bishop of Green Bay