



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Bishop Ricken blesses and breaks ground for new Holy Trinity Parish church in Oconto, WI

OCONTO, Wis. (May 11, 2018) – Bishop David L. Ricken, Father Joel Sember, dignitaries and parishioners opened a new chapter in the history of Holy Trinity Parish with the blessing of the building site and the turning of the first shovel of earth for a new parish church on Friday, May 11, 2018. The Holy Trinity project is the first new church to be built in the diocese since Prince of Peace Parish in Green Bay was completed in 2008.

“The people of the parish have worked long and hard for this day,” said Fr. Joel Sember, pastor. “The Oconto community has a history of faith and family tradition. This is about honoring our past while building towards a bright future together.”

Holy Trinity Parish can trace its roots back to 1669, when Father Claude Allouez arrived by canoe in what is now Oconto. He celebrated the first Mass in this area on Dec. 3, 1669 – the Feast of St. Francis Xavier – and soon established St. Francis Xavier Mission, the first mission in northeastern Wisconsin.

Holy Trinity Parish, the result of the merger of St. Peter and St. Joseph Parishes, was established in 1996. The current Holy Trinity site, formerly St. Joseph Parish church, was built in the late 1800’s and is in need of extensive repairs and is not ADA compliant. The new church will contain some of the stained glass and statues from both former buildings, together with a brand new altar and renovated sanctuary furnishings. It will be beautiful, accessible, and energy-efficient.

Construction by general contractor The Boldt Company is expected to begin in May with completion in time for Christmas. The current location will remain in use while the new church building is constructed. Anyone interested in becoming a member of Holy Trinity Parish is encouraged to contact the parish office at (920) 835-5900.

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**Who we are:** As friends and followers of Jesus, the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay is devoted to fostering households and communities of discipleship through the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church. We are missionary disciples striving to lead all people to the Kingdom of God. Established in 1868, the diocese is composed of 324,000 Catholics in 16 counties: Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Forest, Kewaunee, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago.

**Contact:** Justine Lodl, director of communications, at 920-272-8213 or [jlodl@gbdioc.org](mailto:jlodl@gbdioc.org); or Sarah Bradford communications coordinator, at 920-272-8209 or [sbradford@gbdioc.org](mailto:sbradford@gbdioc.org).