



Feast of Christ the King – November 23, 2014

To be read in conjunction with the homily, or after communion

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Happy Feast of Christ the King! I would like to take this opportunity to invite you into a journey of prayer and discipleship so that we may follow Christ our King more closely.

We know that the Kingdom of God is very different than the governments we know. It is a kingship of love, especially self-sacrificing love. As Pope Benedict said, the power of the Messiah is not the power of the kingdoms of the earth, but the power of truth and love.

Today, I would like to invite you, and all Catholics of northeastern Wisconsin, on a six year journey that will take us to the year 2020. I am calling this journey, Disciples on the WAY, for that is a great description of who we are. In this journey we hope to draw closer to the Lord as individuals, as parishes, and as a diocese. I am breaking our journey into three parts. The first part is focused on prayer. Today, and for the next two years, we will grow in our friendship with Jesus as we deepen our own prayer life, and help others to pray as well. Jesus taught his people to pray, so that we can recognize His Presence within us and all around us.

My hope is that each parish will see itself as a school of prayer, a place where we help each other learn how to pray more deeply and so grow in our friendship with the Lord Jesus. I hope that in the next two years we can build a renewed love for Jesus, cultivate our friendship with Him and rekindle, or experience for the first time, the fires of Divine Love placed in all of us at baptism. Our parishes, then, can become living communities of prayer.

We begin at home. My mother used to say that a house is just a house until the family invests love in it, then it becomes a home. I would ask you to seek ways that you can pray together as a family and grow to love the Lord and the Church as a family unit. In our families and in our parishes, we will be helping people to learn different ways of praying, from meal prayers to the rosary, praying with the Sunday scripture readings, and simply spending a few moments of quiet by ourselves or as a family. During these next two years I myself will be going to different areas of the diocese offering a day of prayer for those in the area. During these days, I will share some of the forms of prayer, meditation and contemplation that have helped me so much through the years.

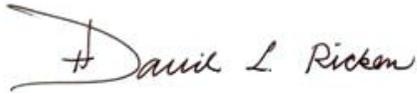
In addition to our personal and family prayer, I have asked every parish to provide a holy hour once a month. During this time of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, you will be invited to come together to pray for yourself, your family, your parish, your diocese, and the Church throughout the world. Our hope is that we will become a more prayerful people as we strive to live vibrant Catholic Christian lives.

I encourage you to read my new pastoral reflection, "Teach My People to Pray" as it explains the intent of these first two years of our six year journey as "Disciples on the WAY." By listening to the Lord Jesus more carefully in all we do, we will be able to draw closer to His divine love and be transformed into living, loving, on-fire disciples eager to spread the Good News of Christ, the King of the Universe.

By living lives of deep friendship with Jesus, we as followers of Jesus, as disciples, will be more engaged and empowered to live out today's Gospel mandate of Jesus to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, and visit the sick and the imprisoned. "When you did it for one of these least ones--you did it for me."

God bless you and your families, your loved ones and friends!

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David L. Ricken". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a small cross symbol at the beginning of the first name.

Most Reverend David L. Ricken
Bishop of Green Bay