



DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

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Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year to you, your family and friends! At this time of the year, when we share gifts with those whom we love, I would like to include a Christmas gift and extend a special invitation to you and your family.

My gift is an image of the Holy Family – Jesus, Mary and Joseph -- along with a prayer. On Sunday, Dec. 27, the Feast of the Holy Family, I invite you and the members of your family to pray the attached prayer and dedicate your home and family to the Holy Family. By praying this dedication prayer, you are simply asking for a special blessing upon your home; that every member of your family may be filled with the same quality of love that exists in the Holy Family.

As Christmas nears, we remember that God loves us so much that he sent his Son Jesus to be a part of our human family. When we pray at home, with each other or for others, we invite God's love into our lives. Jesus lives among us and makes our home, whether we live by ourselves or with others, a place of love and faith.

During this season, I highly encourage you and your family to engage in regular prayer together and to attend Sunday Mass at your parish or a parish near you. On the first Christmas, Jesus came to us in the manger at Bethlehem. Today, Jesus comes to us most fully at Mass. Instead of the manger, Jesus is at the altar, feeding us with his Word and his Body in the Eucharist.

I also encourage you to read and pray with the Bible. With this letter, is material to help you pray at home. There are meal prayers, a guide to the Rosary, and a way to pray with the Sunday Gospel reading before coming to Mass.

As the famous saying goes, “the family that prays together stays together.” We are one family -- the Catholic faith and love unites us all. As the spiritual father of our diocese, I pray for you. If you have a specific prayer request, please write it and send it to me so I can pray for your intention during the coming year.

May God bless you and all of the families and households of our diocese, as I remain,

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

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

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Easy-to-print prayer resources from the All-Household Holy Family Mailing.

THE ROSARY

- Make the sign of the cross and pray the Apostles' Creed while holding the crucifix
- Say the Our Father on the first large bead
- Say the Hail Mary three times, once on each small bead
- Say the Glory Be
- Say the first mystery aloud, then pray the Our Father on the second large bead
- Say the Hail Mary 10 times, one on each small bead
- Say the Glory Be
- Say the second mystery aloud, then pray the Our Father on the next large bead

At the end of the rosary, say the Hail, Holy Queen and:

O God, whose only begotten Son, by his life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation. Grant, we beseech thee, that while meditating upon these mysteries of the most holy rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may both imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Nativity
4. The Presentation in the Temple
5. The Finding in the Temple

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption
5. The Coronation of Mary

THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

1. The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
3. Jesus' Proclamation of the Coming of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist as a Sacrament

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God
the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.



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OUR FATHER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you;
blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.

HAIL HOLY QUEEN

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;
to you we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,
your eyes of mercy toward us;
and after this, our exile,
show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God;
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
Amen.

Diocesan Household Prayer of Dedication to the Holy Family

(Feast: December 27)

Let us pray,

O Joseph, Guardian and Protector of the Holy Family,
pray for us that through the example of your holy obedience
all who dwell here may be guided in their daily work
and journey of faith.

O Mary, Our Mother,
through you Christ made his home with us on earth
and sanctified the life of our homes.
Pray for us that we may grow in holiness by your example
of compassion and merciful love.

O Jesus, we set before you now our trials and joys.
Look graciously upon this home,
that it be dedicated to your Holy Family in peace, faith,
and the example of your merciful love.
Protect us both here and away,
and welcome those who have gone before us into your heavenly home.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

BEFORE MEAL PRAYER

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts
which we are about to receive from
Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

AFTER MEAL PRAYER

We give Thee thanks Almighty God,
for these and all Thy benefits which
we have received through Christ
our Lord. May the souls of all the
faithful departed, through the mercy
of God, rest in peace.
Amen.



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WHAT IS LECTIO DIVINA:

This ancient tradition is a beautiful way of praying with the Bible. Pope Benedict says that “*the diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that intimate dialogue in which the person reading hears God who is speaking, and in praying, responds to him with trusting openness of heart. If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church – I am convinced of it – a new spiritual springtime.*” “*Teach My People to Pray*”

Thus, lectio divina is critical to the New Evangelization, so that our members are energized continuously on the Word of God, both at Mass and also in our own personal or group prayer. “*Teach My People to Pray*”

THE STEPS INVOLVED IN LECTIO DIVINA:

Lectio – Reading

Meditatio – Meditation

Oratio – Praying

Contemplatio – Contemplation

STEP 1: LECTIO: READING

- Select a passage from Scripture.
- Read through this passage a few times and allow the words to capture your attention and your being.
- In this way, you begin to listen as God speaks to your heart.

STEP 2: MEDITATIO: MEDITATION

- During this phase you seek to acquire the mind of Christ and learn what He wants to reveal to you.
- As you read, certain words, phrases or even thoughts might have jumped out at you. Take some time during this stage to consider why these phrases and words might have jumped out at you.
- You might imagine yourself as an observer in the Scripture passage, reflecting on what you see, hear, taste, touch and to what and whom you are drawn to.
- Consider how the words relate to your life today. At the end of your prayer, stop writing and speaking. Focus on the Lord, rest in Him and enjoy being close to him in love.

STEP 3: ORATIO: PRAYING

- During this phase you pray from your heart and respond to what Jesus has spoken to you in the Holy words of Scripture.
- Allow the grace of these words, images and thoughts to move you to a heartfelt prayer. During this time, you personally ask Jesus for help, guidance, insight and direction and find yourself talking to Him naturally.

STEP 4: CONTEMPLATIO: CONTEMPLATION

- During this time you find yourself resting with and in the Lord. Rest in His presence so that the very core of your being is stilled.
- Center your attention on God.
- Allow the Word to stir within you the courage, strength, energy and guidance for a fresh start and a new beginning.



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