



Diocese of Ogdensburg

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May 1, 2020

Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

God desires that all children be entrusted to the love and care of a mother and a father. Mary is our spiritual mother. Joseph is our spiritual father. In 2017, the Diocese of Ogdensburg was consecrated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. On Friday, May 1, the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker, I will consecrate our Diocese to St. Joseph in the chapel of the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Watertown.

According to St. Pope John XXIII, God desires devotion to St. Joseph to surge forth in our day. My friends, it's time for our total consecration to Joseph. We need the spiritual fatherhood of St. Joseph to help us protect the Church, marriage and the family. As Protector of the Church, we rely on his powerful intercession in the struggle to combat evil, both outside and inside the Church. We go to Joseph to strengthen our resolve to protect our families and marriages. We go to Joseph for his assistance in regaining the gift of spiritual fatherhood for our dads.

St. Andre Bessette, OMI during an epidemic miraculously nursed many of the dying back to good health in the name of St. Joseph. Those of us who have made a pilgrimage to St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal are aware of Joseph's powerful intercessory prayer for healing. The Oratory's walls, lined with crutches, give tangible testimony to the power of his prayer. As Hope of the Sick, we rely on St. Joseph's intercession for those suffering from the corona virus and from all illnesses.

Joseph was the first missionary. We invoke the patronage of St. Joseph as an impetus for the Church's renewed commitment to evangelization in the world and to re-evangelization where religion and the Christian life were formerly flourishing and are now dormant. "With his powerful spiritual fatherhood..., our Church can be renewed as a light to the nations, a beautiful city on a hill" (*Mt.5:14-16*). (D. Calloway, *Consecration to St. Joseph*).

The man who helped to raise Jesus walks with us on this journey of faith. Joseph's steadfast trust in God and his patience with God's plan prepared him for events that he did not foresee or understand. St. Joseph is a model of persevering faith, courage and hope. With prayers of trusting abandonment, we confidently go to this carpenter who took the Child and His Mother on the perilous journey to Egypt and back.

On this Feast Day of Joseph the Worker, the faithful of the Diocese of Ogdensburg are determined to go to Joseph, for the sake of our families, our marriages, our Church and our sick. While the current health crisis necessitates that the Consecration not be open to the public, you will be able to participate by social media. Please refer to our diocesan webpage. Good St. Joseph, Pray for us!

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg