



06 September 2026 + Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Last Sunday I preached about St. Paul who warned converts to Christianity in the Greco-Roman, and who urges us: "Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect." Joining in the new missionary effort of evangelization today, we also have to be honest and recognize the pagan and hedonistic elements of our current culture that are simply incompatible with following Christ and to renounce them. It seems Bishop Battersby had somewhat of a similar inspiration, and wrote the following to us:

"My dear Co-workers in mission,
Come Holy Spirit, enkindle in our hearts the fire of your love. Greetings. I just want to offer a note of encouragement as we move into the next phase of our renewal efforts in the diocese. In the weeks coming more information will be available to show how we are making the pivot to mission so dear to our hearts. Mission and the renewal it entails is not and should not be hard. It must follow the pattern laid out for us in the Acts of the Apostles, we don't need new programs or employing buzz words like pivot to mission as a substitute for substantial progress. Recently I asked that a Mass of the Holy Spirit be regularly said in our parishes. Also, I asked that every Prayer of the Faithful would conclude with the prayer: Come Holy Spirit. I did this not out of a quaint piety but because it is only in the Holy Spirit that true renewal and successful mission will be carried out. We don't need new programs we need to employ the structures and patterns given to us. Yesterday as I was praying, an inspiration came to me and I was moved to ask St. Michael the Archangel, the Guardian Angel of this Diocese, my Guardian Angel and the Angelic Hosts to remove any obstacles that inhibit renewal in this Diocese. Well I guess that was from the Holy Spirit because I received almost immediate confirmation of the appropriateness of this request. Therefore, I commend to you and make this request of each of you in the sphere of your authority. I ask each of us to implore their angels to remove any obstacle to renewal in your life, in the life of the parish, in the lives of your parishes families. I ask that each of us in the sphere of the authority that is ours, as bishop, as priest, as deacons and religious, as parents to make this same prayer to the angels and patrons of your parish, including the patrons of the names you bear. For instance, I would also include the intercession of St. Gerard, St. William, St. Lawrence, as my patrons along with my Guardian Angel. If you are a pastor of a parish your parish and supporting me in the diocese you would ask the same intercession of the angels in removing obstacles. My brothers and sisters we need the aids God gives us and we must not neglect the powerful intercession of our allies, the angels and saints. I am filled with hope that renewal is what the Holy Spirit intends for the Diocese of La Crosse. Please join me in being fully engaged in this renewal effort. We do not repudiate what has gone before we build on the foundation laid by others. Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping me make this part of Wisconsin given to us, a garden of holiness and love in Jesus Christ. In the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Chaste Heart of St. Joseph I am your bishop and brother.

+Bishop Battersby

Let us assist Bishop Battersby in whatever way we can in his effort to lead us in these challenging times!