



ARCHDIOCESE  
OF NEW YORK

## *SOME THINGS TO KNOW*

*FEBRUARY 15, 2021*

**YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH** With the Apostolic Letter *Patris corde* (“With a Father’s Heart”), Pope Francis recalls the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the declaration of St. Joseph as patron of the universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a “Year of St. Joseph” from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021. Prayers, devotions and other resources were sent to each priest. Another copy is included in this month’s combined mailing. On March 19, His Eminence plans to consecrate the Archdiocese of New York to St. Joseph. His office of liturgy is preparing for us the prayers that the cardinal will use on this occasion so that all in our parishes may join in the act of consecration on the same day and perhaps at the same hour.

**LENTEN GUIDELINES 2021** Last month, these guidelines were sent to each priest for distribution among the people. Please be sure to include them in the parish bulletin.

**FAMILY LIFE PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE DIVORCED/SEPARATED** Due to the ongoing concerns with COVID-19, this prayer service with His Eminence at St. Joseph’s Seminary on Saturday, March, 20, 2021 will be postponed and will be rescheduled. Stay in contact with Carmen Noschese at (646) 794-3194 or via email at [carmen.noschese@archny.org](mailto:carmen.noschese@archny.org).

**NEW YORK CITY CLERGY PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION** The New York City Department of Finance has advised that there is a real property clergy exemption that priests are eligible for if the priest owns real property in New York City which includes a condominium and private house. Cooperative apartments are not eligible. This exemption provides a \$1,500 reduction in assessed value on a property owned by a member of the clergy. There are several requirements: the priest needs to have his primary residence in the State of New York; needs to be actively engaged in ministerial activities as his principal occupation or be a retired priest (age 70 and over); an application needs to be submitted to the Department of Finance by March 15, 2021 and if the exemption is granted, it needs to be renewed yearly. Applications can be completed and submitted online at the New York City Department of Finance, Property Section, Clergy Exemption or you can submit a paper application by mail.

**ARE CHURCHES EXEMPT FROM COPYRIGHT LAWS?** Parishes are reminded to respect all copyrights when reproducing Mass texts, scripture readings and music. A guide to copyrights and licensing may be found [here](#).

**RETURNING TO SUNDAY MASS** A recurring question from many priests is, “*Can we remove the dispensation from attending Mass which many people believe they have?*” Whenever it comes up, it allows for the opportunity to remind everyone that in the archdiocese, the cardinal never dispensed from the obligation to go to Mass on Sunday. Some bishops used that word, but we never gave a dispensation from Mass, so we can’t exactly say it has been lifted. The obligation for Sunday Mass is always there. It’s a divine law. We didn’t make it up and we can’t dispense from it. His Eminence simply instructed the people that they have the right to make a prudential, moral, laudable judgement to excuse themselves, given the gravity of their condition which prevented them from attending. We have a lot of our elders who are still housebound and they shouldn’t feel they need to come back. We need to say don’t you worry about it. But, some of the conditions that may have kept people away are gone now. We have to begin to ask ourselves if we can safely return to Mass. One of the ways to gauge that is to ask ourselves, what else am I doing? If people are going to soccer games or getting their hair done, they should be able to come to Mass. As they are socializing in these and other ways, we need to encourage them to come back. We are facing the serious issue of Mass attendance which is at 50% of what it was a year ago. With evangelization as a priority, we might consider sending thoughtful, intelligent, engaging, contemporary, catechetical bulletin inserts, handed out on Sunday and shared with those at home. One final thought for those who want or need to be cautious about being in crowds, and yet are really missing Mass and receiving the Jesus in Holy Communion. We have weekday Masses in every parish where people can have extra distancing and feel quite safe. And we offer the consolation of sacramental confession each Saturday.

**SECURITY TRAINING FOR RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT** The Insurance Division will be sponsoring a two-day training and fitness seminar for retired law enforcement personnel who wish to act as armed security officers for their parishes. The training session will be held on Friday, March 12 and Saturday, March 13 at St. Ann Church in Nyack. The training is free of charge and meals/refreshments will be provided. Completion of the training session is an archdiocesan requirement to permit retired law enforcement to act as armed security officers at our parishes. The training is being provided by a private security vendor staffed by off-duty New York law enforcement professionals. It is open to any retired law enforcement personnel who is licensed to carry firearms. Any parish that wishes to send qualified parishioners to the training should contact Mr. Frank Napolitano at [frank.napolitano@archny.org](mailto:frank.napolitano@archny.org), 646-794-3024 or 203-253-7736.

**COMPENSATION FOR VISITING PRIESTS** These days, many pastors who serve alone in their parishes are relying on the assistance of supply priests to help them with the celebration of the sacraments. A number have called our office to inquire about just remuneration. A Mass fee refers to the amount paid by a parish to non-assigned priests who assist on Sundays, weekdays or emergencies by celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, or other services rendered over and above the \$15 offering made by the donor for a Mass intention. Factors, including transportation are to be considered in setting this rate. A survey indicates that the standard range for Mass is \$75-\$100 plus compensation for traveling distance. If the stipend you are paying is on the low side, you may wish to consider making an adjustment.

**RECONCILIATION MONDAY DATES** Lenten Reconciliation Monday will be observed on March 29, 2021 from 3:00 to 9:00 pm in the archdiocese and the Dioceses of Brooklyn and Rockville Centre. Advent Reconciliation Monday will be held on December 20, 2021 from 4:00 to 8:00 pm in all the parishes of the archdiocese and the Diocese of Brooklyn. Promotional material will be available as we get closer to the date.

**DYNAMIC CATHOLIC** Invite your parishioners to sign up for *Best Lent Ever*. This is a service from Matthew Kelly and it features daily video reflections on the season. He explains how Lent is not about what you give up; it is about who you become. For more information, contact 859.980.7900 or [info@dynamiccatholic.com](mailto:info@dynamiccatholic.com).

**LENTEN DAY OF RECOLLECTION FOR PRIESTS** will be held on Wednesday, February 24 at 1:00 pm via Zoom Video Communications. Leading us in our reflection will be our archbishop, Timothy Cardinal Dolan.

**501(C)3 GROUP TAX EXEMPTION RULING** Each pastor received a copy of the 2019 group ruling letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) confirming that organizations listed in the 2020 edition of *The Official Catholic Directory* are recognized as exempt under section 501(c) of the tax code. Kindly share the memo and documents with your parish bookkeeper and accountant.

**RIGHT IN OUR OWN BACK YARD** Bishop Jerry Colacicco was asked by Jubilee Studio 33 to publish his meditations on the *Tre Ore* which were delivered at St. Patrick's Cathedral last year. Titled *Beneath the Cross*, these reflections will sure to be of interest to you and your parishioners. The accompanying flier with information about ordering is included in this mailing.

**CARDINAL'S ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL** Like income tax time, the \$21 million CASA comes around quickly. Each year, all of the 288 parishes join together as one family to support the many spiritual, educational, pastoral and charitable services which are offered to the sick, the needy, disabled, aged and homeless. This year's theme is intended to remind parishioners of the fundamental mission of the Church and our shared responsibility to further this mission through our own prayer, service and financial sacrifice. The primary ingredient for success with the appeal is when the pastor and priests stand behind it. It boils down to your leadership and enthusiasm. Although it is an additional duty for you, most of the work is done by the development office with the preparation of scripts, bulletin articles, altar announcements and petitions for the universal prayer. The pastor just needs to be a partner and deliver the message. When your campaign manager calls upon you, please welcome him or her warmly. Remember that when a parish reaches goal, it is a great victory to the parishioners. And there is a financial incentive to all who go over goal. So, let's all team up and work for a successful appeal.

**ST. PATRICK'S DAY MASS** will be celebrated on Wednesday, March 17 at 8:30 and reflects the pride we have and the glory we give to the patron saint of the Archdiocese of New York. You may wish to promote this Mass with your parishioners in your upcoming parish bulletins. For 2021, with the expected winter spike in COVID-19 cases, and vaccines that will take some months to have a widespread impact, parades all over America will likely be postponed or significantly downsized and replaced with virtual events. The Catholic Center offices will be closed for the holy day.

**MASS OF THE CHRISM** Our eyes these days before Ash Wednesday are already on Holy Week. An important event of that week is our Mass of the Chrism, this year on Tuesday, March 30, at the cathedral, at 4:00 pm. Detailed information was sent in a memo on January 29, but another invitation is forthcoming. Seating will be limited to the clergy and seminarians and the cardinal will not be hosting a gathering afterwards. At the conclusion of Mass and at the direction of the rectors of the seminary and the cathedral, six-ounce bottles of the holy oils prepared by the seminarians will be distributed. Holy oils from previous years will not be accepted for disposal; these may be buried in a dedicated place at the parish or burned in the new fire at the Easter Vigil.

**OFFICE HOLIDAYS** On Monday, February 15, the Catholic Center will be closed in observance of Presidents' Day. On St. Patrick's Day, Wednesday, March 17, it will be closed to honor the patron of this archdiocese. On Holy Thursday, April 1, it will close at 1:00 pm; and on Good Friday, April 2 and Easter Monday, April 5, it will also be closed. Leave your message in the department's voice mailbox and it will be returned on the next business day. To reach the chancery after hours and on weekends, call Community Answering Service at 877-582-2996. Add this number as "*Chancery Emergency*" to the list of contacts in your mobile telephone.

**SHARE THE WORD** Please give access to all your priests and staff members to the material which is pertinent to them, enclosed in the monthly mailing from the office of the vicar general. For it to succeed, we recommend that this *Some Things to Know* be posted in the public area of the general office.

**NOTE ON THE CHANGE TO THE COLLECT PRAYER** Here is a reminder that the previously publicized change to the conclusion of the Collect prayers at Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours goes into effect on Ash Wednesday. Refer to the memo in the announcements mailbox of February 4 for the decree and details.

**JUST ONE MORE THING** Overheard: "*After a few days of not going out, I saw someone I knew walking by on the sidewalk outside my house. I immediately ran to the window and started yelling to him. Now, I understand dogs.*"