

# Pastoral Instruction on use of the prayer to St. Michael the Archangel in the Liturgy

## *Awake from your Slumber*

One of the great tragedies of our day is our state of constant busyness. As individuals and families, we are in a never-ending whirlwind of activity. From the moment we wake up in the morning until we prepare for bed at night, we are constantly running from activity to activity. Only to start again the next day. In our efforts to keep up with this race, we often lose sight of God – turning our eyes away from He who is our strength and our peace.

While we may be tempted to believe that constant busyness is harmless, and even a normal part of life, we must recognize the effects it is having on our spiritual life – many of us are living in a state of spiritual slumber. In our present day, the Enemy is using our constant state of preoccupation to distract us from the war he is waging against our souls and the souls of those we love. As we carry on in the hustle and bustle of life, the enemy is attacking us as he works to incite chaos through a culture of confusion, doubt, and fear.

When we lose sight of God and start to rely on our own abilities and talents, the enemy, Satan, uses the opportunity to tempt us to move further from God and toward sin. Satan is the father of lies. He seeks to kill and destroy all that is good. He lures us with false promises and hopes that never materialize. When we follow him into sin, we are only left with loneliness, alienation and hopelessness. The fruits of sin are all too evident in our world today. Poverty, racism, violence, wars, genocide and so many other social ills are becoming fixtures in our daily lives, locally and worldwide.

As pastors, parents and all baptized Catholics, we have a responsibility to heed St. Paul's call to awake from our slumber (Romans 13: 11) and put on the armor of God (Ephesians 6:12) to stand firm in our faith against the attacks of the evil one who is intent on destroying the Christian faith.



## *History of the St. Michael the Archangel Prayer*

Around the year 1886, Pope Leo XIII had a vision of the spiritual warfare taking place in the time in which he lived. As he was concluding the celebration of the Mass, he was struck by fear at a vision of the demonic attacks to be carried out against God's people. The encounter had such an impact on the Holy Father that he was moved immediately to pen the words to the prayer so many of us have come to love – the St. Michael the Archangel Prayer. The prayer to St. Michael the Archangel is a powerful plea for the Archangel's intercession. As we read in Scripture, we seek the aid of the one who was chosen by God as protector of the Church and victorious warrior against the evil one.





the Bishops, and for our own Bishop, priests and deacons in the Diocese of Green Bay.

*St. Michael the Archangel, Pray for us!*

## *How this is to be implemented* *- Praying the* *St. Michael Prayer at the* *conclusion of the Mass*

We take all our prayers, intercessions and needs and trustingly place them in our loving Father's care. The attacks of the powers of darkness against the Pope, bishops and priests, the Church herself, parishes, marriages and families (the domestic church), warrant the call for all the spiritual weapons necessary for protection against the evil forces threatening the very fiber of our society. In her wisdom, the Church has always looked to the Saints to intercede for us with the Father. The need for the protection and intercession of St. Michael is greater now than in any other time in modern history.

**Therefore, as Successor of the Apostles and Bishop of Green Bay, I direct that, beginning with the weekend of the First Sunday of Lent, February 17-18, in every parish, mission, chapel, campus ministry, and religious institution, that the St. Michael prayer be prayed publicly after Mass (after the final dismissal) and before the closing hymn. The prayer is to be prayed with only a simple invitation to join in praying the Prayer of St. Michael for protection. I further direct that in parishes where the Prayer is currently prayed at other times during Mass, that, as a sign of a unity, the Prayer to St. Michael is prayed after Mass as directed above. I envision this to be prayed perpetually within the Diocese of Green Bay.**

Prayer cards, in both English and Spanish, will be distributed to parishes to be placed in the pew for the use in praying the prayer.

Pastors are encouraged to use this Pastoral Instruction along with Catechetical materials which will be provided to assist in the catechesis of the faithful.



## *Be Shielded in Battle – Pray to* *St. Michael the Archangel*

We are on the battlefield facing attacks that seek to destroy us by robbing our children of their innocence, provoking doubt in our young people, inciting fear in the hearts of adults, stirring division in Christian marriages and causing division in the Church. This time of spiritual warfare demands that we take our stand against the evil one by invoking the intercession of St. Michael the Archangel.

Be not afraid, however! God never leaves His children defenseless – God sent His Son into the world to save us. He has also appointed angels in heaven to fight for us! We are not alone in this struggle against the evil one. The Lord Jesus, and His army of angels – particularly his chief warrior St. Michael the Archangel – go before us in battle.

As the family of God and in your own families, let us turn to St. Michael the Archangel in prayer. In asking for this powerful saint's intercession, we place our families and congregations under his protection as we trust in the victory to come through the saving power of God. We seek in prayer the protection of all marriages and families which are under the attack of the enemy. We also intercede for the universal Church, the Pope and