

An Invitation from Archbishop Vigneron

September 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In introducing a new rally cry this year to *Unleash the Gospel*, we acknowledge that we have, indeed, been held back from fulfilling our mission as disciples of Christ in the Archdiocese of Detroit. Before this November's Synod, I felt it important that we deeply and seriously reflect on the sinfulness that has kept us as a People of God apart from our Lord, and repent for this.

At 7 p.m. on Friday, October 7, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, we will host an archdiocesan Mass for Pardon at the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Within the Mass, we will pray a Litany of Pardon, and I will come personally before God to repent on behalf of the Archdiocese for the sins committed over the generations by our bishops, our priests, our lay ministers, our institutions, and all the faithful — sins which, all too often, have become embedded in our church-culture.

This will be a public moment of repentance, but one also that can and should have a personal effect on every Catholic in our Archdiocese. Our late Holy Father, St. John Paul II, modeled for us this act of repentance when he led the Universal Church in a “Day of Forgiveness” at the beginning of Jubilee 2000. The Mass for Pardon is to be a cornerstone in our local observance of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, and an occasion of repentance and humility for every member of the Archdiocese. Just as the Sacrament of Confession gives us the sanctifying grace to reach new levels in our relationship with God, this act of repentance is a vital step in our imploring the Holy Spirit to grant us all the graces of a New Pentecost in our Archdiocese.

In God's unfathomable wisdom, He gave us, sinners though we are, the responsibility of spreading the Good News, knowing that in our humanity we would err — but promising us deliverance from sin and death with our heartfelt repentance. In this spirit, I invite you to attend the Mass for Pardon, but more importantly to unite with me in this prayer for forgiveness in your own way. It may be by offering a rosary, or a day of fasting, visiting the Door of Mercy at the Cathedral, or receiving the Sacrament of Penance at your own parish.

Grateful for your faithfulness and united with you through our patron saint, Saint Anne, and her daughter, Our Lady of the Rosary, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Rev. Allen H. Vigneron
Archbishop of Detroit