



**Diocese of Madison**

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For Immediate Release**

**Diocese of Madison, Wis., to have new cathedral  
Nearly 100-year-old St. Bernard Church to be elevated**

**Madison** – It is with great joy that the Diocese of Madison announces that the Holy See has approved its new cathedral site. St. Bernard Church in Madison, located on the city's east side, was selected as the site.

"The cathedral is an important part of the mission and identity of the diocese," said Bishop Donald J. Hying. He called a cathedral the "symbolic mother of the entire diocese. It's the church of the bishop, but it is also the church of the people of the diocese."

The Diocese of Madison has been without a dedicated cathedral building since 2005 when St. Raphael Cathedral in downtown Madison was destroyed by an arson fire. Since that time, there have been many ideas discussed about how to replace the structure.

The cathedral question was answered as part of the Into the Deep strategic planning effort that is presently realigning diocesan resources to better accomplish and live out the mission to go make disciples. The diocese explored three options during its most recent efforts to fill the need for a cathedral: Continue to utilize diocesan parishes for celebrations, rebuild the cathedral on its previous site, or petition the Holy See to name an existing church as the new cathedral. In light of these three options and feedback, Bishop Hying chose to petition the Holy See to name St. Bernard Church as the new cathedral.

St. Bernard was chosen partly because it lies within the boundaries of the city of Madison proper, which is required by Church law. Its current pastor is Fr. Michael Radowicz. "It brings me great joy to see a campus with a prominent past here in the Diocese of Madison become the cathedral parish," said Father Radowicz. "It is a most worthy structure, and its ornamentation, architecture, and presence on the east side of Madison since its opening in 1927 will tell a story of history and be for all the faithful a sign of great hope for the Church here in the future." He added that, "This is a moment of great rejoicing for the parishioners of St. Bernard as they watch their much-beloved parish be transformed through the efforts and talents of so many to become a central part of diocesan life. We are all looking forward to welcoming everyone, and sharing our spiritual home with those who visit and pray here."

Like St. Bernard, St. Raphael Cathedral was an existing parish that was elevated to that of a cathedral when the Diocese of Madison was established in 1946. The cathedral will host many of the major diocesan events such as priesthood ordinations and the annual Chrism Mass. For the past several years, other churches in the diocese hosted these events.

St. Bernard Church is currently undergoing renovations and remodeling to prepare it for its elevated status. Masses are being celebrated in the parish center.

Father Radowicz said, “We have assembled an excellent team of contractors and craftsmen who are all coming together to make this great project a reality. Our Lord always gives us who we need, and we have been tremendously blessed with the talent, faith, and zeal that so many are bringing to this project.”

“We will have a cathedral in the city of Madison,” Bishop Hying said. It will be a “beacon in the heart of the city reminding us that yes, God loves us, God is primary, and in Jesus Christ, the victory has been won for us.”

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**For additional information and images, visit: [madisondiocese.org/cathedral](http://madisondiocese.org/cathedral)**

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