



January 13, 2020

Feast of St. Hilary, Doctor of the Church

Dear Pastors, Priests, Deacons and LEMs:

On September 30, 2019, the feast day of the great Latin Father, Saint Jerome, Pope Francis promulgated in his Apostolic Letter, *Aperuit Illis*, a Motu Proprio instituting that the Sunday of the Word of God will be marked each year on the 3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time. This year it will be celebrated on January 25-26, 2020. Underscoring the importance of Catholics to have a greater understanding of Sacred Scripture the Holy Father hopes to inspire not only a day devoted to the Bible but an on-going movement toward greater intimacy with God's holy Word.

With that in mind, I have put together some resources for the celebration of the liturgy on Word of God Sunday. Other resources to encourage greater use and understanding of scripture in your parish programs such as catechetical, RCIA, youth ministry, and adult formation programs throughout the year will follow soon after January 26.

[Resources for the Sunday of the Word of God, Third Sunday in Ordinary Time \(Year A\) January 26, 2020 Courtesy of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions Washington, DC](#)

The document provides a summary of the Church's teaching on Scripture and the place of Scripture within the Liturgy. It suggests several ways that the day might be marked:

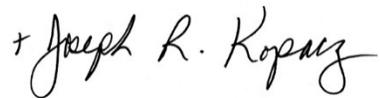
- In the Eucharistic celebration, the sacred text could be enthroned in an extra special way, perhaps adorned with flowers, in order to focus the attention of the assembly on the centrality of God's word in the Eucharist and in daily life.
- It would be particularly appropriate to highlight the proclamation of the word of the Lord and to emphasize this in the homily of the day.

- The Order for the Blessing of Readers (Book of Blessings Chapter 61) at each Mass, in order to bring out the importance of the proclamation of God's word in the liturgy. Each reader could be presented with a Lectionary Worship Aid or a Bible to further emphasize the significance of this ministry.
- Apart from the day itself, renewed efforts should be made to provide members of the faithful with the training needed to be genuine proclaimers of the word.
- Pastors and LEMS can also find ways of giving a Bible, or one of its books, to the entire assembly as a way of showing the importance of a daily walk with the Word of God, especially the Scripture of the day.
- My hope is that you continue to encourage the daily use of Scripture in your parish. If you need additional liturgical ideas, please contact Mary Woodward at mary.woodward@jacksondiocese.org. For additional faith formation resources, contact Fran Lavelle at fran.lavelle@jacksondiocese.org.

On the road to Emmaus the risen Lord *opened their minds to understand the Scriptures (Lk 24:45)* and immediately afterwards they recognized him in the *Breaking of the Bread*. The Word of Life and the Bread of Life are our fountain of life.

May all the baptized live our vocation as the Lord's disciples in the light of God's Word.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph R. Kopacz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson