



## DIocese of Superior

### Office of the Bishop

January 9, 2024

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing you today in the hopes of clearing up some very serious misconceptions of the validity, in the eyes of our Roman Catholic tradition, of the sacraments being offered at Monte Christo Monastery in Siren, Wisconsin.

Some years ago, Edward and Robin Cycenas built a very beautiful chapel on their land not far from Siren. At that time, they were members at St. John the Baptist parish in Webster, Wisconsin. Today the Cycenas' chapel and property are known as Monte Christo Monastery. This property and chapel are not sanctioned in any way by the Diocese of Superior.

A few years ago, Edward Cycenas was "ordained a priest" by an Archbishop Ambrose Moran, Archbishop Metropolitan Byzantine Rite. I cautioned him, his ordination would very likely be invalid in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church and that he would be excommunicating himself from the Roman Catholic Church. Since then, he has been conducting services at Monte Christo Monastery and has been raised to the Office of Chorbishop. Chorbishop Edward's brother, Joel, was also ordained a priest, presumably by Archbishop Ambrose.

When individuals have asked me about attending the services and receiving their sacraments at Monte Christo, I have cautioned them that they were probably not receiving valid sacraments in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church.

In recent months, Archbishop Ambrose Moran has taken up residence at Monte Christo Monastery and their ministerial activity has increased greatly. On their Monte Christo Monastery website, they advertise as a "Byzantine Orthodox Greek Catholic" monastery with bi-ritual jurisdiction including the Tridentine Mass and Divine Liturgy. They have been inviting people to come worship with them by means of advertising, mailings, and word of mouth.

On October 13, 2023, Fr. Andrew Ricci, Rector of the Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior, and I met with Archbishop Ambrose and Chorbishop Edward. I informed them that my main concern was for the spiritual welfare of the faithful of the Diocese as I questioned the validity of their ordinations and their union with the Roman Catholic Church. To date, I have not received any valid proof that they are in communion with Rome. Furthermore, the Annuario Pontificio, the annual directory of the Holy See of the Catholic Church, provides among other information the names of all cardinals and bishops. Archbishop Ambrose Moran is not listed in the directory.

Therefore, with the information I have:


I AM WARNING ANYONE WHO ATTENDS SERVICES AT MONTE CHRISTO MONASTERY, EITHER THE TRIDENTINE MASS OR BYZANTINE RITE, YOU ARE MOST LIKELY NOT RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OR BYZANTINE CHURCH IN UNION WITH ROME, NOR ARE YOU FULFILLING YOUR SUNDAY OBLIGATION.

- I do not have any evidence of the validity of Archbishop Ambrose Moran's ordination or his communion with the Roman Catholic Church.
- I do not have any evidence that Chorbishop Edward Cycenas' and Father Joel Cycenas' ordinations are valid.
- Even if Archbishop Ambrose were validly ordained by bishops in communion with Rome, Chorbishop Edward and Father Joel have serious canonical irregularities with their ordinations.
- I have not conferred any of the necessary faculties to Archbishop Ambrose Moran, Chorbishop Edward Cycenas, Father Joel Cycenas or any of their associates to celebrate Mass or sacraments in the Diocese of Superior.

In conclusion, as your Bishop, I am entrusted to the care of the souls of the Diocese of Superior by the Holy See. Therefore, I must tell you that there is serious doubt in the validity of the sacraments being celebrated at Monte Christo Monastery.

I have sent a copy of this letter to both Archbishop Ambrose and Chorbishop Edward asking again for verifiable proof of their ordinations in communion with the Roman Catholic Church. If at any time I receive such information I will gladly issue my letter of correction and apology. Until then, I must caution the Roman Catholic faithful against attending their services.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

  
Most Rev. James P. Powers  
Bishop of Superior