

GERARD WILLIAM



By the Grace of God and

the Favor of the Apostolic See

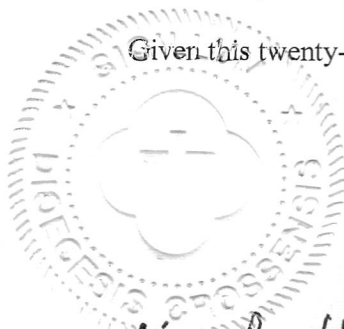
BISHOP OF LA CROSSE

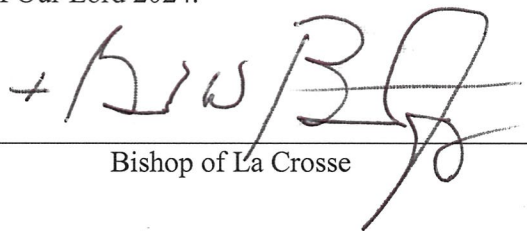
DECREE

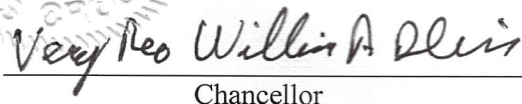
The liturgical celebration of the Blessed Virgin Mary under her title the Immaculate Conception is a grace-filled day particularly in our nation, as she is our Patroness. In the past, when December eighth landed on a Sunday, the Solemnity was transferred to Monday without the obligation following. However, a recent clarification from the Dicastery for Legislative Texts has stated: "Can. 1246 §1 establishes the feasts that must be observed as days of obligation. The canon does not provide for exceptions. For those reasons, those feasts are always days of obligation, ... even when the aforementioned transfer occurs. Therefore, in that year, the feast must be observed as a day of obligation on the day to which it is transferred." That means, this year, December ninth is a Holy day of Obligation.

This clarification, coming so close to the Solemnity itself, causes some problems with it adjoining the second Sunday of Advent and being so close to Christmas when communal penance services often occur. Since a priest's time is limited and calendars are hard to change, I believe a dispensation is appropriate for this year for the **obligation** to attend Mass on December ninth. With the obligation being lifted, the number of Masses will not need to be unnecessarily multiplied, but I do ask each of my brother priests to have at least one Mass in which the people of God may celebrate the great gift of the Immaculate Conception. Her great *fiat* is inspiration and hope to each of us and is wholly worthy of our honor. I do ask each of the faithful to do some form of extra prayer if unable to attend the holy Mass, particularly praying the Rosary with at least one other person in community.

Given this twenty-third day of October in the year of Our Lord 2024.




Bishop of La Crosse


Chancellor