



January 14, 2025

Dear Faithful of the Diocese of Covington,

I am writing to you today to advise you that the Missionaries of St. John the Baptist (the MSJB) has been suppressed. The group no longer has a connection with the Diocese of Covington or the Roman Catholic Church. Former members retain all the rights and obligations associated with their vocational state — layman or diocesan priest.

The MSJB were a group of men — two priests and several laymen — who hoped to establish a religious order in the Catholic Church. They were established as a public association of the faithful here in the Diocese of Covington on an experimental basis. The priests of the MSJB contributed substantially to the founding of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and members of the association ministered in the parish.

The suppression of the association has no canonical effect on the status of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. The parish is a personal (non-geographic) parish that celebrates the Holy Mass and other liturgies entirely contained in the Roman Missal promulgated by Pope Saint John XXIII in 1962. I intend to continue this pastoral accommodation to Catholics who are attached to this liturgy, always in accord with the direction and guidance of the Holy See.

This process began in April 2024. Between April and July, I consulted with the diocesan Presbyteral Council and members of the MSJB about the future of the association. After much deliberation and prayer, I issued a decree suppressing the association on July 1, 2024. That decree is published in this edition of the *Messenger*.

I delayed publishing the decree of suppression in the *Messenger* because the MSJB had the right to request that I reconsider this action. They had the further right to appeal the suppression prior to the decree taking effect. With the time limit for further recourse having expired, I now confirm that the decree in question has become effective, and the public association has been extinguished.

I communicated this confirmation to members of the former association in November 2024. They are released from all promises and commitments in relation to the extinguished association. Lay members are encouraged to continue to pursue their vocational discernment with a diocese or an institute of consecrated life. Priest members remain incardinated priests of the Diocese of Covington. Restrictions upon priestly ministry that were in place prior to this action remain in place.

Thank you for your prayers for the Universal Church, the Diocese of Covington, the former members of the MSJB, and all who love them and have been grateful for their ministry. Please continue to hold us in prayer.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Most Rev. John C. Iffert
Bishop of Covington