

JOHN GREGORY KELLY
BISHOP OF TYLER

DECREE

Opening the Fortieth Anniversary Observance of the Diocese of Tyler

To the clergy, consecrated persons, and lay faithful of the Diocese of Tyler:

On December 12, 1986, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Saint John Paul II erected the Diocese of Tyler from territories formerly belonging to the Dioceses of Galveston-Houston, Beaumont, and Dallas. He established the city of Tyler as the episcopal see and designated the Church of the Immaculate Conception as its Cathedral. The erection of the Diocese took effect on February 24, 1987.

For forty years, the Lord has gathered his people in East Texas, nourished them by his Word and Sacraments, raised up vocations and ministries among them, and sent them forth to bear witness to the Gospel. We remember with gratitude the bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated persons, and lay faithful whose prayer, sacrifice, and service have built up this local Church. We also remember in prayer all the faithful departed who shared in the life and mission of the Diocese during these years.

This anniversary is an occasion to recall the graces of the past. It is an invitation to renewed conversion, deeper communion with the Lord Jesus, and more generous participation in the mission entrusted by him to his Church. Under the theme **"Be Conformed to Christ. Go Out to the World"** we turn our eyes anew to Christ, so that, formed in his likeness and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, we may proclaim the Gospel faithfully and serve our neighbors with charity, especially those who are poor, suffering, forgotten, or in need of hope.

The words spoken by the first Bishop of Tyler, Charles E. Herzig, to the new Diocese of Tyler at the beginning of his episcopal ministry remain a fitting summons for us:

> "Together let us keep our eyes on Christ; let us seek the things that are above. Let us continue with renewed energy and confidence simply to live the Gospel and to build up the Body of Christ."

Therefore, by virtue of my pastoral office as Bishop of Tyler, I hereby decree that the 40th Anniversary observance of the Diocese of Tyler shall open on Sunday, November 22, 2026, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, and shall continue through Sunday, May 16, 2027, the Solemnity of Pentecost.

I invite every parish, mission, Catholic school, diocesan institution, apostolate, and community of the faithful to unite in prayer, thanksgiving, remembrance, and renewed missionary service during this anniversary observance. In a particular way, I ask that the faithful join in the principal diocesan and parish celebrations established for this anniversary. I commend the present and future mission of our Diocese to the maternal intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title of the Immaculate Conception. I also ask the intercession of the Venerable Antonio Margil, whose evangelizing work more than 300 years ago formed a pillar for the establishment of this local Church; let this also be a time of more intense prayer for his beatification and canonization.

May this holy season of remembrance and renewal deepen our communion as the Church of Tyler, deepen our conformation and fidelity to Christ, and send us forth with apostolic courage to make him known and loved throughout East Texas and beyond.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Tyler on this 1st of November, the Solemnity of All Saints, in the Year of Our Lord 2026.

+ Gregory Kelly

Most Reverend Gregory Kelly
Bishop of Tyler

Peyton Low
Chancellor