

Bishop Barres invites Catholics to explore life, legacy of St. Ignatius

(CNS) -- Bishop John O. Barres of Rockville Centre is inviting Catholics in the diocese to participate in activities marking the Ignatian Year to celebrate the life and teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

"St. Ignatius stands among the great saints in the breadth and depth of his contributions as well as his witness and effects upon the life of the Catholic Church that continue centuries after his death," Bishop Barres wrote in a pastoral letter about the special year, which opens May 20 and runs to July 31, 2022. The letter, which can be read at www.DRVC.org/IgnatianYear, invites people to explore the life and legacy of the saint, who was a founder of the Society of Jesus and whose theological and spiritual contributions continue to influence Catholics and other people of faith.

Jesuit Father Arturo Sosa, superior general of the order, called for an Ignatian Year to mark the saint's conversion. The period starts on the 500th anniversary of Ignatius, as a soldier, being injured by a cannonball during the Battle of Pamplona, Spain. Ignatius spent months in bed recuperating and reading about Jesus and the lives of saints. He decided he wanted to be one of them, laid down his sword, gave away his belongings and set off on a journey to discern God's will for his life. The year ends on the saint's feast day, which also is the anniversary of his death in 1556 at age 64.

As part of the Ignation Year observance, several priests of the Diocese of Rockville Centre are preparing reflections on the saint's life and legacy. Watch this newsletter and the diocesan website (www.drvc.org) for more details.