



DIOCESE *of* LACROSSE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

31 March 2021
Year of St. Joseph

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the Lord give you peace.

I write to you today in light of the decision by the Wisconsin Supreme Court to overturn the statewide mask mandate. It remains a difficult challenge during this time to balance our needs with the need to protect public health. We are all called upon to make sacrifices that will benefit others so I am strongly encouraging that our Churches and schools continue the practice of having individuals wear masks while participating from a safe social distance.

Please keep in mind that while I am strongly encouraging this practice many of our cities and counties have their own mask mandates that will remain in effect regardless of the decision by the state Legislature. Cities such as Eau Claire, La Crosse, Menominee and Wausau are just a few of the cities that have issued their own mask mandate so please make sure that you are aware of what the mandate is for your area and encourage your parishioners, staff and students to abide by what is mandated.

Although we seem to be moving in a positive direction with Wisconsin becoming one of the lead states, by percentage of population vaccinated, the recent increase in cases in the state reminds us that we are still fighting the battle against this pandemic. The exercise of limitations, such as wearing masks and social distancing, as difficult and frustrating as they may be, should be viewed as a charitable act offered for others. If we all do this simple thing and embrace this small sacrifice, we can do our part to ensure that everyone stays healthy and that our Churches and schools can remain safe environments for all to participate.

Let us continue our work in Christ showing his love by caring for one another. May the glory and promise of this Easter season bring peace and happiness to you and those you hold most dear.

Yours in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, I am,

Bishop William Patrick Callahan
Bishop of La Crosse