

**From the Pastor's Desk:
Sunday, August 9, 2020**

As most of you probably know by now, Governor Tony Evers has declared a Public Health Emergency and issued an Emergency Order requiring individuals to wear face coverings when indoors and not in a private residence, with some exceptions as clarified and defined in the order. The order became effective at 12:01 AM on Saturday, Aug. 1, 2020, and will expire on Sept. 28, 2020 or by a subsequent superseding order.

As Catholics we are obligated to obey the law. I have no doubt that this mandate is unpopular with some of our parishioners. Despite any disagreements, I am asking that all wear masks unless unable to do so for one of the valid reasons provided for in the executive order.

I am not a virologist, immunologist or medical doctor. I have no expertise in these matters. Therefore, I find it prudent to follow the well-considered recommendations of those who know more than me in this regard. The vast majority of those who have studied medicine believe that masks help to prevent the spread of this virus. I urge all of our parishioners to consider the safety of their neighbors, even if it means doing something that we'd rather avoid doing.

Fr. Ryan Preuss, pastor of our neighboring parish included the following that is helpful information: *"Because of this order, beginning Saturday, August 1, we will require people to wear a face covering at all of our sites. A face covering is defined as "a piece of cloth or other material that is worn to cover the nose and mouth completely," meaning you can wear a cloth face mask, neck gaiter, paper or other kind of disposable face mask, or religious face covering, according to the*

order. Mesh masks, face shields, and any masks with openings, holes or vents are not permitted.

During Mass, myself and the other priests, as well as the Cantors, are not required to wear a face covering, according to an exception in the order (Section 2, iv). While we are not wearing face coverings, we must remain six feet away from others. We will wear face coverings when giving out Communion and when we are not on the altar.

However, we recognize that there are multiple exceptions to the order as to why people may not be able to safely wear a mask, and due to privacy concerns, we will not question people about why they are not wearing them. If you have any concerns about mask wearing or the order, please contact the Fond du Lac County Health Department at 920-929-3085."

Above all, let us remain charitable toward one another. Some will be grateful for this move on the part of the Governor and others will vehemently disagree. No doubt we have not heard the last of it as I expect there will be challenges in the courts. In the meantime, and despite our differences, I know that we can all agree to treat one another with courtesy and respect.

Peace & all good!

Fr. Gary