

DIocese of LA CROSSE

Office of the Bishop

August 26, 2024

My Dear Brother Priests, Deacons and members of the faithful in the Diocese of La Crosse

Praised be Jesus Christ! I pray this finds you well.

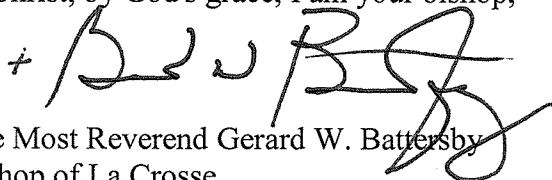
I write today regarding the status of the “*Congregatio Mariae Reginae Immaculatae*” (CMRI) community, who run Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church in Seneca, Wisconsin. On the website for the CMRI’s is a statement and explanation of why they believe the Chair of Peter is vacant. This joins them to other sedevacantists who themselves believe they are somehow saving or preserving the faith, but in reality have separated themselves from the Church’s head. The CMRI describes itself as a Traditional Catholic Religious Order that is not in union with the Pope. As such, it is not a legitimate religious order of the Catholic Church.

One of my roles as your bishop is to “exercise vigilance so that abuses do not creep into ecclesiastical discipline especially regarding the ministry of the word and the celebrations of the sacraments.”(can. 392)

With this role in mind I must state that the faithful of the Diocese of La Crosse should not attend Masses nor receive the sacraments provided by the CMRI’s. Masses are available in nearby churches of the Diocese of La Crosse. Particularly regarding the sacraments of confession and marriage, these celebrations would not only be illicit, but also invalid.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Let us pray that God will bring all Christian Communities into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, so that we may all be one. (cf. John 17:21)

In Christ, by God's grace, I am your bishop,

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The Most Reverend Gerard W. Battersby
Bishop of La Crosse