



DIocese of LA CROSSE

Office of the Bishop

July 8, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Praised be Jesus Christ.

I am writing regarding the status of the "Fraternité Notre Dame" community, who have a place near Solders Grove under the name "Hermitage of the Heart of Jesus." While their outreach in some of the roughest neighborhoods in Chicago, San Francisco and New York is inspiring, the community 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.

My role as your bishop is to "exercise vigilance such that abuses do not creep into the local Church and mar her ecclesiastical discipline, especially as to the ministry of the Word and the celebrations of the sacraments." (can. 392)

With this in mind, I must clearly state that the faithful of the Diocese of La Crosse should not attend Masses, nor receive the sacraments provided by the Fraternité Notre Dame Community. Particularly in regards to the sacraments of Confession and Marriage, as 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 Jesus' desire that we may all be one might come to fulfillment. (cf. John 17:21)

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

The Most Reverend Gerard W. Battersby
Bishop of La Crosse