MEMORANDUM

Date: October 7, 2021
To: All Clergy, Parishes, and Institutions of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
From: Reverend Tom Margevičius, Director, Office of Worship
Re: Ongoing Vigilance; Vatican Synod; COVID Corps Priests; Liturgical Calendar

I. Ongoing Vigilance in Liturgical Practices.
The Delta variant of the coronavirus continues to create difficulties, especially among the unvaccinated, and we are not over the pandemic yet. Consequently, liturgical protocols as indicated in the July 28 memo remain in effect. Parishes are welcomed to continue livestreaming the liturgy and take special concern for vulnerable populations. As always, a pastor may choose to take more precautions in his parish than those that are minimally required.

II. Opening of the Vatican Synod.
On May 21 this year, the Holy See invited each diocese to prepare for the next Synod of Bishops in October 2023, focused on the topic of synodality. Pope Francis will formally begin preparations for the Vatican Synod on Sunday, October 10, and has directed all dioceses to do likewise a week later. Archbishop Hebda will celebrate Mass Sunday, October 17 5:00 pm in the Cathedral of St. Paul, during which he will inaugurate our participation in the Vatican Synod, and pray as well for our own Archdiocesan Synod. Given the late notice, I recognize that it may be impractical for parishes to change liturgical plans for that Sunday. But for those who desire, the Archbishop allows Pastors to incorporate any of the Vatican’s liturgical suggestions (which were issued at the end of September) into their own parish celebrations that weekend, including lectionary readings, wearing liturgical red, special prayers of the faithful, and music. Priests are permitted to use the Roman Missal’s “Masses for Various Needs and Occasions,” I. 5: “For a Council or a Synod.”

III. More COVID Corps Priests Needed.
The need for anointing COVID patients is once again rising, and the “COVID Corps” is being stretched thin. We have passed 1,000 anointings and seek more priests to volunteer for this mission of mercy. In consultation with Mrs. Sydney March, RN (who valiantly, cheerfully, trains Corps priests in safety protocols and keeps diligent records), we are now inviting all priests, irrespective of age or assignment (even those retired), to volunteer. By adhering to the same precautions healthcare professionals use (i.e. proper donning and doffing of gowns, gloves, face shield/eye protection, and N95
masks), there is much less risk of being infected than was thought when the Corps were first inaugurated, especially considering the limited time priests spend administering the sacrament. Bishop Cozzens has transferred to me coordination of the Corps. Those willing to volunteer should email me margeviciust@archspm.org, and I will put you in touch with Nurse Sydney.

IV. Liturgical Calendar 2021 – 2022.
The Archdiocesan Liturgical Calendar for 2021 – 2022 is now posted here. New this year, we have incorporated all special Vatican, USCCB, and Archdiocesan liturgical observances, replete with links to relevant texts and sources. As ever, contact me with any questions.