



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

3 October 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With this letter, I wish to reinstate the option of allowing the Sign of Peace at Mass. Although it has been some time since we have ceased the pandemic protocols at Mass, I have delayed the reinstatement of the Sign of Peace while considering what pastors might do in order to instruct parishioners on the proper way that this ritual action is to be carried out. That being said, I am asking every pastor of every parish to outline the following points and catechesis on the Sign of Peace. This may be done by publishing this letter in the bulletin or having it read at all Masses, according to the discretion of the pastor.

- The Sign of Peace signifies the peace that comes to us from the Risen Christ, who has just come down upon the altar through the consecration of the bread and wine. It is a moment of prayerful recollection in which we receive Christ's peace and likewise pray for peace.
- The Sign of Peace is to be exchanged in a manner that is appropriately reverent for the celebration of Mass, remembering that we are in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.
- The Sign of Peace is not to be unduly prolonged, noisy, or an opportunity for chatter.
- The Sign of Peace, though often shared through a handshake, does not require physical contact with another person if this is not desired. It may be given by simply saying "peace be with you" or similar words.
- The Sign of Peace is to be given to those immediately around you (the person on either side is sufficient). There should not be movement from one's place nor should there be gestures waved across the church.

Additionally, I would suggest that the sharing of peace between the faithful may be used as a sign of "progressive solemnity." Since it is an optional rite, it may be desirable to reserve its use for Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

As we continue our journey during this time of the Eucharistic Revival, it is important to examine and re-evaluate how our liturgical practices are either conveying a sense of the

DIOCESE OF SIOUX CITY

1821 JACKSON STREET • SIOUX CITY, IOWA 51105
(712) 233-7555 • FAX: (712) 233-7557

sacred and belief in the Real Presence of the Eucharist or detracting from it. Doing so is multi-faceted and requires us to be honest about how faithful we are in carrying out the Church's liturgical vision and how fruitful or unfruitful certain practices have been in building up our Eucharistic faith and devotion.

May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, and may our Lord continue to draw you ever deeper into his Eucharistic mystery!

Your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Walker Nickless". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Most Reverend R. Walker Nickless
Bishop of Sioux City