Revised Dates: October 3rd 2018

Dear Clergy and Diocesan Convention Delegates of the Diocese of Eau Claire,

In contrast to previous Diocesan Conventions, the 2018 Convention has some differences. 1. We will not register until Saturday morning, November 10, but we will have a banquet on Friday night at Lehman’s Supper Club in Rice Lake. 2. We will have the Eucharist at 8:30 am Saturday at Grace Church in Rice Lake and then travel to the Wisconsin Technical College in Rice Lake. At the Conference Center we will register and conduct all our business beginning around 10:15 am. We will have a box lunch around noon. I anticipate concluding the Convention before 1 am, but I cannot guarantee a time of adjournment.

The banquet will have someone make a brief address about the topic of this year’s Convention, but the intent of the evening is primarily social.

The topic of the Convention is none other than considering the future of the Diocese. This is especially true regarding the nature of the Episcopate. As most of you know, I will turn 72 years of age in October of 2020. By canon law of the Episcopal Church, I am required to resign as your Bishop Diocesan. There are several factors for you to consider. Would you prefer to have a Bishop Provisional from a nearby Diocese or someone to serve as Bishop Provisional who served as a Bishop previously and is now resigned? Would you consider union or juncture with a nearby Diocese? Working within the current model that we have of a part time Bishop Diocesan, would you want someone who is in charge of a congregation as well as part time Bishop Diocesan?

These questions don’t have easy answers. There are many factors and much information that should come into consideration. Probably no decisions need to be made until the 2019 Convention, but major strategic planning needs to begin at this Convention. As part of Saturday’s Business Session, I will share my thoughts and do my best to provide pros and cons to each possibility in my address. You will then have time for small group discussion and a time when we as the full convention evaluate these matters. My hope is that you will give the Leadership Council and the Strategic Planning Committee headed by Fr. Guy Usher direction as to what recommendations need to be made by the 2019 Convention.

As usual we will be approving a budget, voting for people to serve in various offices, and considering any canons or resolutions. Below is the schedule for Pre-Convention Hearings. I ask that every delegate attend one of the three meetings. They are necessary in helping you to understand the Business Session of the Convention. Here is the schedule:

Saturday, October 20 at 10 am: Christ Church in La Crosse

Saturday, October 20 at 4 pm: Grace Church in Menomonie

Saturday, November 3 at 10 am: St. Alban’s Church in Spooner

I look forward to seeing you at this year’s Convention. You will be receiving other information before the Pre-Convention Hearings that will include the budget, election information, and possible resolutions and Constitutional or Canonical changes. With my love and best wishes, I am,

Your brother in Christ,

Jay