



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF BISMARCK

PO Box 1575
Bismarck, ND 58502-1575
Phone: 701-223-1347
Fax: 701-223-3693

www.bismarckdiocese.com

January 20, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

I write to you on a matter of the greatest importance and urgency. You have read or heard that a bill has been introduced in the North Dakota Senate which would force every Catholic priest to violate the sacred Seal of Confession. It is **SB 2180**.

As Catholics, we know that this is simply not possible for any priest to do no matter what the reason may be and most especially, no priest may reveal anything he hears in Confession and he may not identify any person who comes to Confession.

What is equally bad about this bill is that it makes the State and not our beloved Catholic Church the moderator of our faith and our sacramental life. If this bill passes it will have a direct impact on every Catholic in the State. If this bill passes it will impede directly our free exercise of our religious beliefs and practices.

If this bill passes the result will be that it discriminates against the Catholic Church and other religious denominations in our State. To abolish the clergy exemption of the mandatory reporter law without including other such confidential relationships such as the attorney-client privilege is unjust and does discriminate. The best course of action is to not change this law at all.

I ask you to contact your State Senator and clearly tell him or her to vote **NO on SB 2180**. Please contact your Senator at the Senate Message Center or contact your Senator by phone or by email. Please do so today as this is one good and effective way for all of us to defend our faith and our Catholic life.

Let us continue to pray for our elected officials that they will act with wisdom and prudence in all that they do in representing us so that they promote the common good for all and not harm the common good.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


The Most Reverend David D. Kagan
Bishop of Bismarck