Dear Queen of the Holy Rosary Family,

When I was a newly ordained priest at Most Pure Heart of Mary Church in Topeka, Father Frank Krische was my pastor and boss.  One day while we were alone in the church, Father Frank said, "Come here, Billy.  Look up at that crucifix."  It is a magnificent crucifix, large and very moving.  Father Frank continued; "Look at Jesus' arms.  One is extending to the left, and the other is extending to the right.  Father Bill, just like Jesus' arms, the people of God are coming to you from the left and coming to you from the right, and you gotta love them all!"

"You gotta love them all."  This is a message I want to share with you.  As you know, the Center for Disease Control has come up with new directives that allow for fully vaccinated persons to not wear masks or maintain social distance in outdoor or indoor settings.  Moreover the Archdiocese has rescinded all mandates from the Bishop this week, but allows for pastors to implement policies for their particular parish setting.  A number of parishioners still feel vulnerable, and have voiced their concern about going to Mass without masks and social distancing.  Other parishioners have also voiced concern about having to wear the mask when they have been fully vaccinated.  "You gotta love them all!"

Taking this into account, and in order to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of all, I have decided that the south section of the main church body will continue with every other pew seating.  This section will also require masks and social distancing.  All other parts of the Church will not require masks for those who are fully vaccinated.  This includes the north side of the church, the transept of the church, the balcony and the Parish Hall.  These areas will all be mask optional.  Windows will be kept open for fresh air, and we will continue to go to communion using the side aisles.  Communion ministers will wear masks while distributing communion.  I will also ask that ushers wear the Mask in order to be sensitive to those who are feeling vulnerable.  Masks will not be required for those going to communion but encouraged.  We will continue to keep the Parish Hall and the balcony open to provide as much seating as possible.  We will continue to livestream the Masses and other liturgies to our vulnerable loved ones at home who cannot join us in person.  These directives will be in effect starting Monday, May 24th.

I fondly remember the wisdom of Father Frank Krische.  I think it is a beautiful message for all of us.  We are so blessed with the progress that is being made in fighting the pandemic.  We are so blessed to be able to come together as a family united in the Eucharist.  We are so blessed by Jesus whose arms are extended to all who comes to him.  May our parish be like the arms of Jesus to welcome and embrace all.  Be always mindful of the vulnerable, and keep me in your prayers.  Be assured of mine.

In Christ's Healing Love,

Father Bill Bruning