

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many thanks to all of you who donated blood and/or volunteered at the recent Wilton Community/Brookwood High School FFA blood drive. We give thanks for the 81 pints collected, and encourage all who participated to continue to donate in the future.

My letter to you today, is about giving life to others. Participating in the blood drives, is one way that we can do this, but there are other ways. April is National Donate Life Month. It is a reminder, that we can continue to give the gift of life to others, through the gift of life that God has given us.

In a recent article in the *La Crosse Tribune* (Emily Pyrek, "Looking for Assistance," Friday, April 9, 2021, p. A1), we learn the following:

Nationwide, over 110,000 individuals are waiting for an organ transplant--a person is added to the waitlist every 10 minutes--and on a daily basis 20 patients will die from lack of donor organ availability.

A single donor can impact up to 85 lives, saving up to eight, through tissues and organs, including the eyes. But while 95% of Americans are willing to be donors, only 58% are registered as such, and with 107,000 U.S. residents on the waitlist as of February 2021, donors are of the essence.

The process of organ donation can be as easy as completing the information for organ donation when you get your new driver's license. When your driver's license is made, a special seal is placed on it to show that you are an organ donor!

When I participated in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, I remember observing part of the organ donation process. How wonderful it was to realize that someone's life, or perhaps many person's lives, would soon be changed for the better! All of this was possible, because the donor had taken a few minutes to register and give the gift of life.

Some of you may be thinking that you are too old to donate, but all donations, no matter your age, are appreciated. The *La Crosse Tribune* article states:

Age should also not be a determining factor in registering as a donor--the U.S. Government Information on Organ Donation and Transplantation notes the liver of a 92-year-old man saved the life of a woman over two decades younger....

For more information on organ donation or to register, visit <https://health.wisconsin.gov/donorRegistry/public/donate.html>.

As we thank God for the precious life that God has given us, may we also look to ways that we can share God's gift to us with others. By giving blood, and registering for organ

donation, we can share the gift of life with our neighbors in need. Thanks be to God.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy