

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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To: All Pastors and Parochial Administrators
From: Bishop Frank J. Caggiano
Re: Use of Masks at Parish Liturgies and Events
Date: May 17, 2021

As you are aware, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has loosened mask-wearing guidance for those who are fully vaccinated.

The CDC is still recommending wearing masks in crowded indoor settings, specifically buses, planes, hospitals, prisons and homeless shelters, but fully-vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, "except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance."

In response to this change in guidance, Governor Lamont has announced that vaccinated residents of Connecticut are no longer required to wear masks indoors after May 19th, 2021.

As a result, I ask that you inform your people of the following changes:

1. For those who are fully vaccinated, they are no longer required to wear a mask to attend Mass or any other liturgical or social function held on parish property.
2. In an abundance of safety, pastors are encouraged to remind those who are fully vaccinated that are free and welcome to continue to wear masks if they choose to do so.
3. All those who are not fully vaccinated must continue to wear masks when attending Mass or any other liturgical or social function held on parish property. While there is no way for us to enforce this requirement, please remind your parishioners that this obligation, borne from our commitment to protect human life, transcends the mandate of the state. It flows from our very belief in the Lord of life, who commands us to protect, defend and respect all human life, from natural conception to natural death.

Furthermore, the change in the use of masks will also necessitate a revision of the protocols that were scheduled to go into effect beginning May 21, 2021. Revised protocols are attached to this memo for your review.

As always, I am most grateful for your continued collaboration and for your generous priestly service.