

Update to Diocesan COVID-19 Mitigation Efforts

The following Press Release was issued by the Diocese of Greensburg on August 9, following the publication of our last bulletin; clarifications on certain liturgical points were clarified August 13. Please note that most precautions surrounding liturgy remain as before, with the exception of permission for hymnals. We will continue to sanitize high contact surfaces after Masses.

Additionally, in the absence of mask requirements for those attending Mass or visiting the parish, I echo Bishop Kulick's strong recommendation of masks while also asking that all be considerate toward others for their decisions.
~Fr. Matthew

Bishop Larry J. Kulick is committed to caring for the health, safety and spiritual wellbeing of parishioners and their communities. Today, he met with members of his Recommencing In-Person Worship Advisory Committee, which is comprised of clergy, laity and healthcare experts. This group is charged with continuously re-evaluating coronavirus mitigation efforts.

As cases of the Delta and other new variants are surging, Bishop Kulick is updating the following mask protocols effective Friday, August 13:

- Anyone volunteering on behalf of a parish must wear a face covering indoors, regardless of their vaccination status.
- This includes ministers of Holy Communion, ushers, greeters, servers, parish event volunteers who are working inside, faith formation leaders and catechists who are working indoors, those visiting the sick or homebound, and any other indoor ministry. Lectors and cantors may remove their masks while reading or singing.
- When working indoors, Parish and Diocesan staff are required to wear face coverings in common areas.

- Clergy should wear masks for the distribution of Holy Communion and while interacting in close proximities to other persons. They should continue to follow hand sanitization directives.
- Masks for those attending indoor worship services or indoor parish events are strongly recommended. Each parishioner is strongly encouraged to make a responsible decision about the use of masks and vaccinations.

As previously announced, the bishops are reinstating the obligation to attend Mass in person on Sundays and holy days beginning on Sunday, Aug. 15, 2021. However, by longstanding Church law, this obligation does not apply to those who are:

- Sick
- Have a serious health risk
- In a household with those at risk
- Primary caregivers to those at risk
- Have serious anxiety or concerns about being in a large-group setting due to COVID-19
- Unable to attend Mass in person

As an act of charity, anyone who believes they might have COVID-19 or one of its variants should stay home.

Those who are legitimately excused from Mass on Sundays and Holy Days are encouraged to spend time in prayer, meditating on the death and Resurrection of the Lord, reading the sacred Scriptures, and uniting themselves to Christ. They are also encouraged to investigate the numerous options to view broadcasts and streams of Mass, which are continuing across the country.

These COVID-19 mitigation efforts will be re-evaluated as more information from the CDC and local healthcare officials becomes available.)