

### **New COVID Mask Mandates for Catholic Schools, Catechesis, Youth Ministry**

*(The following is adapted from a letter sent to all parishes by Dr. Maureen Marsteller, Superintendent of Schools and Managing Director of the Office of Faith, Family, and Discipleship)*

On August 31, Governor Tom Wolf announced that the Pennsylvania Department of Health has mandated the wearing of masks in schools. The order is stated as follows:

*Each teacher, child/student, staff, or visitor working, attending, or visiting a School Entity shall wear a face covering indoors, regardless of vaccination status.*

This will apply to our Catholic school students, our Faith Formation students, and our youth ministry programs regardless of gathering site.

The order includes an exemption from the wearing of masks for any student or employee who is unable to wear a mask for medical reasons. Should that be the case with your child, please contact the principal of the Catholic school that your child attends, or the Director of Religious Education or Youth Ministry for the Faith Formation or youth ministry program that your child attends. The order does allow for the wearing of a plastic face shield should the child be medically exempt from wearing a mask.

Although the mandate is due to begin on Tuesday, September 7, we will initiate this policy immediately.

Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to another year of helping your children and family share and grow in our Catholic faith.

### **Additional COVID Precautions at IRMC Hospitals and Facilities**

Please note that as of 9/1 IRMC is no longer allowing visitors for patients in their hospitals and facilities. Fr. Matthew contacted the hospital information desk and was told that he *is able* to make visits, as is the Catholic hospital chaplain. However, if you are planning for a procedure and would like to receive the Sacraments of the Sick, it is easier for everyone if you make the request *before* going to the hospital. Please contact Fr. Matthew at the Parish Office to make arrangements for Sacraments either at the Church or in a Home Visit.