



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

Diocese of Phoenix Update for Use of Face Masks on Parish/School Properties and for Mass (June 19, 2020 / Revised June 23, 2020)

As you know, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have committed to being Healthy, Smart and Holy, as we remain focused on the physical well-being of ourselves, parish staff, volunteers, parishioners and the wider community.

At the press conference on June 17, Governor Ducey stated that “an important part of containing the spread is the use of masks,” and he issued new guidance asking all Arizona employers to implement policies for the use of face coverings by employees and members of the public. He also gave local cities and counties the authority to implement their own face mask policies. This has resulted in many local face mask mandates throughout the Diocese of Phoenix.

In a spirit of the common good and for the protection of individuals and the community, Bishop Olmsted is asking all parishes/schools to comply with the mandatory face mask policies that have been implemented in their area or city which includes:

- Requiring all who attend Mass to wear a face mask in a spirit of care for their fellow parishioners.
- Requiring all staff and volunteers to wear a face mask when on campus and moving about in public areas or when physical distancing is not possible.
- It is important to remember that wearing a face mask does not replace the benefits of physical distancing.
- In a spirit of hospitality, it would be good to have face masks available for those who do not bring one to Mass or a meeting.
- For those who have medical conditions or refuse to wear a face mask – kindness and understanding should be the rule.
- It is critical to follow federal, state, and county public health guidelines to reduce the spread of illness amongst parishioners, staff, clergy, and the community, so these guidelines may be updated as new information and recommendations become available.

The faithful should be reminded that the Sunday Obligation continues to be dispensed during this time of the pandemic. It is important to inform individuals and families that while the Church is being cleaned and disinfected – the risk of contracting the virus remains. For this reason, caution and individual responsibility must be practiced.

Be Healthy, Be Smart, Be Holy!