



# Diocese of Davenport

*Office of the Bishop*

**Effective Immediately**

March 1, 2022

To Pastors, Principals, and People of the Diocese:

On February 25, 2022, the CDC posted new guidelines regarding COVID-19. Consequently, the following safety protocols are in effect immediately in the Diocese of Davenport if your county is at a green (low) or yellow (medium) level, according to the community levels provided by the CDC. If your county is at or returns to an orange (high) level, additional protocols are encouraged, including masking, social distancing, etc.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/community-levels.html>

## **In General**

- Vaccination is encouraged. If you are sick, stay home and follow CDC recommendations for isolation, quarantine and testing.
- Masks are optional. However, masks remain strongly recommended for those who are more vulnerable to the virus, those caring for persons at higher risk for infection, and those who are unvaccinated.
- Social distancing is not required, but please respect requests for distancing from people around you.
- Good ventilation is encouraged as a general health measure.
- Extraordinary or additional cleaning and sanitizing is not required. Normal weekly cleaning is sufficient.
- Drinking fountains may be used. No restrictions on food at gatherings. Follow common food safety protocols.
- Testing before or after travel is not required, but is encouraged if you have symptoms of Covid.
- No limitations on the duration of time gathered for meetings, events or liturgy.

## **Liturgy**

- The dispensation for the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is lifted. For serious reasons such as advanced age, a serious medical condition, caring for someone who is sick, restrictions on travel, or some other grave reason, you don't need permission to be absent from Sunday Mass. Use your common sense to excuse yourself and find another way to pray and keep holy the Lord's Day.
- Choir members and the congregation may sing without masks.
- The regular ministry of greeters, lectors, servers, and Eucharistic ministers may resume. Home visits may resume. However, masks should be worn if any of those present are infected with a contagious disease.
- The use of vessels, water fonts, incense, missalettes, hymnals, collection baskets, and bulletins may resume.
- The Sign of Peace may be exchanged as customary while respecting the wishes of those around you.
- Holy Communion may be distributed under both forms of bread and wine. If you are sick, you should avoid receiving from the cup.
- Other sacraments and sacramentals can be administered as usual.

## **Catholic Schools**

- The schools will continue to encourage safety protocols. Parents have the option to have their children wear masks. Teachers and staff also have the option to wear masks. Those exhibiting symptoms will be sent home.

Please continue to pray for those who are sick, for the people caring for them, and for a swift end to the pandemic.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ *Thomas R. Zinkula*

Most Rev. Thomas R. Zinkula