

A message from Bishop Malesic on keeping people safe from illness this Christmas

News of the Diocese

December 20, 2021

As we approach the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord at Christmas, I wish to share a brief reminder of important guidelines we have in place to keep people safe during this time of pandemic.

The latest information from federal, state and local public health agencies informs us that the Delta and Omicron variants of the COVID-19 virus continue to surge in our area, causing increased illness and hospitalizations. Our health care systems and many of our health care workers are being stretched to the limits. For them and for the safety of all who worship at Catholic parishes throughout the Diocese of Cleveland, I strongly encourage everyone, whether vaccinated or not, to wear a face mask while attending Mass indoors. All who want to attend Mass, and who are otherwise vulnerable, should feel safe and welcome inside our sacred spaces. We should also do our best to help reduce, as much as possible, the number of COVID-19 cases that require the attention of those working in our hospitals.

Those who are ill, have significant health risk factors or care for someone who is immune-compromised or ill, as well as those who have significant fear or anxiety about contracting the coronavirus in a large group of persons are not obliged to attend Mass.

In consideration of others, I am mandating that those who distribute Holy Communion at Mass must wear a mask until the current danger has subsided.

Remember that the situation seems to be ever changing. Stay connected to information coming from national, state and local health authorities, and stay home and get tested for COVID when you are not feeling well. Following these recommendations will go a long way in helping to keep you and others around you safe. Be kind to those who will disagree with this encouragement.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady Help of the Sick, may God bless us and keep us free from all illness.

May God's peace be with you and your family this Christmas and always.