



ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE

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OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

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Dear Father,

May God bless you during this holy Easter season! With last week's announcement by the Centers for Disease Control about masks and face coverings and Governor Beshear's revision of the Executive Order in light of this guidance, I am updating my directive about the issue of face coverings in parish settings.

Effective immediately, any person who has received the final dose of the COVID-19 at least two weeks ago is not required to wear a mask in worship services or other Church settings. Those not vaccinated or not yet fully vaccinated should continue to wear masks. Per the Centers for Disease Control, an individual is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after the second dose in a two-dose series or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine.

Parishes should continue to enforce adequate and safe physical distancing between individuals or family groups. The Governor announced on Friday that he expects capacity limits to be lifted on June 11, and I will send directives that hopefully will be final at that point. Alleluia!

For privacy reasons, we must rely on the good will and honesty of parishioners about their vaccination status. In addition, it will be wise to continue to offer some accommodations to those parishioners who may not feel comfortable yet. At the recent Priests' Council meeting, one pastor stated that he will designate a section of his worship space with more space between individuals or family groups, and of course, anyone who wishes to continue to wear a mask should be supported in doing so.

I also want to share information from our Catholic Cemeteries Office that will be helpful for your parishioners who have lost a family member to COVID-19. Congress has authorized FEMA to provide financial assistance to individuals who incurred cemetery and funeral expenses related to COVID-19 deaths. The Funeral Assistance Line Number: 844-684-6333 (TTY: 800-462-7585) and further information can be found at:

<https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>

This change is a wonderful development! As always, I welcome your comments or insights, and the COVID-19 Pastor Committee and the Office of Worship are available to discuss any specific challenges. Thank you for your leadership. You are in my prayers.

Fraternally yours in our Lord,

Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D.
Archbishop of Louisville