

## A MESSAGE FROM FR. EAMON ABOUT WEARING MASKS

Dear Parish Family,

Greetings. As you all know we are living in a time of great disruption to our normal way of living. Unfortunately, this involves our church and worship life. After being on lockdown for 10 weeks, those who feel safe are now free to attend Mass in person.

Having said that, some and maybe many of you who watch our livestream Masses are surprised and maybe even upset that so many attending church are *not* wearing masks.

I have been very hesitant to make wearing masks *mandatory* since some people see such a measure as an infringement on their freedom. But of course, our freedoms are infringed upon daily when it comes to things like wearing seat belts and following speed limits. These 'infringements on our freedom' are intended for *our safety* and the *safety of others*. Nearly everyone, if not everyone agrees when we are with a lot of people *especially indoors* wearing a mask and social distancing are effective health safety measures.

Currently in our church on the weekends, we do a good job at social distancing but frankly we do not do a good job with wearing masks. Personally, I was slow to wear a mask and need to do a better job *especially* in the light of the large number of increases here in Florida.

As your pastor, I need to be concerned for not only your spiritual welfare but also for your physical wellbeing especially when dealing with a virus that is so *contagious*. Hence, starting July 4/5, in union with nearly all, if not all the parishes of central Brevard, we will be ***mandating the wearing of masks*** or face coverings at the weekend Masses. If uncomfortable with this, I suggest you come to a daily Mass where the wearing of masks will not be mandated. As you know, we don't have a lot of people at daily Mass.

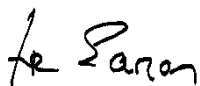
In 1 Corinthians St. Paul has a word for us that is indirectly if not directly related to this issue. He says:  
***Do not make use of your freedom to become a pitfall for others*** (8:9).

We may honestly believe wearing a mask in public where a lot of people are gathered is nonsense, but hopefully *charity* and *humility* may move us to don a mask out of *sensitivity and concern for our brothers and sisters* who feel unsafe in a church setting when others are not wearing a mask.

The desire here is not to impose a particular view on others. The desire is to create the safest possible environment for all present at church.

Please know I care very much for all of you. Please pray that we do not allow the devil to divide us over the simple task of wearing a mask.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Eamon". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Eamon