

Restrictions lifted, but caution prevails

(Updated Aug. 4, 2021)

Mass Obligation Restored

Since mid-June, when COVID-19 positivity rates fell to .7% (their lowest rate since the beginning of the Pandemic) and Bishop McElroy was able to lift all the Mass restrictions put in place to prevent the spread of the disease, two things have happened:

The highly contagious COVID-19 Delta variant has become the dominant strain of the disease in California and positivity rates have increased more than 10 times, topping 7.2% at the end of July.

Health authorities in San Diego and Imperial Counties are following CDC guidance that recommends everyone wear a face covering in indoor public settings, whether they have been vaccinated or not.

The Diocese continues to urge that anyone medically able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine do so and that anyone unvaccinated continue to use a mask around other people.

The COVID-19 rules currently observed in our diocese are:

- Masks are recommended at Mass and other indoor diocesan functions for everyone, regardless of vaccination status;
- All restrictions on capacity and spacing for worship have been lifted;
- All limitations on meetings and social activities have been lifted;
- Distribution of the Eucharist on the tongue is now allowed, although it will continue to be available in the hand. The reintroduction of the shared cup will be determined sometime in the future;
- The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass has ended. Some members will continue be exempt, however;
- It is recommended that non-family members bringing the Eucharist to the sick be vaccinated.

Children under the age of 14 in formation classes and students in Catholic schools will have to continue to wear masks because there is no vaccine yet available for the bulk of these youngsters.