

July 27, 2021

Dear Monsignor or Father or Deacon:

A number of people have been wondering if anything in our diocesan COVID-19 liturgical protocols will be changing as a result of yesterday's renewed recommendation from the CDC regarding masks. At this time, the short answer is no.

Yesterday the CDC recommended that in places with a substantial or high transmission rate of COVID-19, both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals should wear masks indoors in public. We are monitoring the situation. As of now, neither the Commonwealth nor any local health departments that we are aware of have issued further guidelines. There are no mask mandates in place anywhere in the diocese. Except for the fact that the dispensation from participating in Mass will cease on August 15, our current protocols of May 14, 2021 otherwise remain in force. (They are attached for your reference, with the amendment indicated in red.) If something does change, we will obviously let you know.

In the meantime, please know that when the Presbyteral Council meets on September 7, we will take the opportunity to review all of our COVID-19 protocols in light of the situation throughout the diocese and discuss any possible adjustments.

Even vaccinated people can contract the Delta variant, although the CDC notes that those cases are rare and tend to be very mild. Therefore please continue to monitor your own health and encourage others to do so. If you are not feeling well, take the more prudent course, even cancelling Masses or other ministry if necessary. If you are in need of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

As these times continue to confront us with new challenges, please know of my support and gratitude for all that you are doing. Be assured of my continued prayers.

Sincerely,
Msgr. Edward M. Lohse