

## MEMO

To: St. Pius & St. Clement Parishioners  
From: Fr. Joe Martina  
Regarding: New COVID Guidelines  
Date: May 21, 2021

Hello my brothers & sisters.

On Tuesday, May 18, 2021 Bishop Malone met with all the priests of our diocese.

He asked Dr. John Vanchiere, Infectious Disease Specialists at LSU Health to speak about current research and information on COVID-19, the COVID vaccines and the precautions we need to take to ensure everyone's safety.

In light of current research and the availability of the COVID vaccines, Bishop Malone has directed these changes to our Liturgical practice:

**Effective immediately, facemasks are recommended & strongly encouraged but are no longer required for Mass, church meetings or activities.** The primary way to reduce the risk of contracting or spreading COVID or any virus or germ is to wear a mask & regularly sanitize one's hands. According to Dr. Vanchiere the risk of COVID-19 "will never be zero" and our society may have to deal with COVID for the next ten years.

**Beginning Corpus Christi weekend (June 5-6) Bishop Malone will reinstate the obligation for healthy Catholics to attend Sunday Mass (either as a Saturday Vigil or Sunday Mass).** The Church has always taught that those who are ill or physically unable to attend Mass, as well as those who care for them, are dispensed from the Sunday Mass obligation. Bishop Malone is restoring the obligation to attend Sunday Mass (either as a Vigil or a Sunday Mass) for those who are healthy & able to attend.

**Churches may continue to broadcast the Mass.** Bishop believes these broadcasted Masses provide a vital connection to the Liturgy and the church parish for those unable to attend.

**The Sign of Peace is restored to the Liturgy, but without shaking hands.** We may offer the Sign of Peace as a bow or a wave or some other gesture, as long as we refrain from physically touching the other Mass participants.

**The Offertory Gift Procession may be restored to the Sunday Liturgy.** Some church parishes will immediately reinstate the Offertory Gift Procession, while others may wait to reinstate the Procession. **At St. Pius & St. Clement we will continue with the Basket in the back for the time being (and not physically take up the Collection).**

**Parish Receptions are still prohibited.** This is the reason no Reception is planned following the two upcoming ordinations (Nicholas Duncan's diaconate ordination on June 3<sup>rd</sup> & Deacon Raney Johnson's priesthood ordination of June 5<sup>th</sup>).

Thank you everyone. Please join me in continuing to pray for the renewal of our Parish and our Church Family. Peace.

Fr. Joe Martina  
Pastor, St. Pius & St. Clement Churches