



DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

DATE: August 26, 2021
TO: Priests, Directors of Parish Life, Deacons, Principals, Diocesan Staff
FROM: Karina Bak, Director of Human Resources
RE: **COVID-19 Update**

The [risk level](#) for contracting COVID-19 continues to remain high across the United States, classifying most counties in the Diocese of Gaylord in the “Substantial” or “High” risk categories. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends people wear masks in indoor public settings where the risk level is determined to be “Substantial” or “High” regardless of vaccination status.

To help reduce exposure to COVID-19, the diocese strongly recommends that all parishioners and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, wear a mask in the diocesan and parish offices, during Masses, and indoor public gatherings. Masks are required to be worn by those distributing Holy Communion. Additionally, we ask all principals to ask their parents to earnestly consider CDC and local health department recommendations. The current CDC recommendation for schools is universal masking for all teachers, staff, students and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

Pope Francis stated in an August 18, 2021 [public service announcement](#): “Being vaccinated with vaccines authorized by the competent authorities is an act of love. And contributing to ensure the majority of people are vaccinated is an act of love — love for oneself, love for one’s family and friends, love for all people.” Along with Pope Francis, the Diocese of Gaylord encourages all who are able to get vaccinated, contributing with this small gesture “for a better future.”

The following guidance should also be observed:

- If possible, establish an area where social distancing may be observed during Mass; and
- Hang signage indicating that mask wearing and social distancing is recommended.

Resources on the COVID-19 vaccine:

- [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#), Center for Disease Control and Prevention; and
- [FDA Approves First COVID-19 Vaccine](#), U.S. Food & Drug Administration.

We will continue to monitor the CDC and MDHHS sites and update you on any recommendations or orders.