

**PARISH ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE READ BEFORE ALL MASSES
THE WEEKEND OF JANUARY 1-2, 2022**

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As you know, the celebration of the Holy Mass, where we gather to worship God and receive Holy Communion, is the heart of our Catholic faith. Given the recent record-breaking surge in positive COVID-19 cases in Allegheny County and surrounding counties, Bishop David Zubik is reminding everyone of the current diocesan safety protocols. He is doing so in order to safely continue in-person Masses throughout the Diocese of Pittsburgh. This is also being done as an urgent request for everyone to do their part to remain vigilant and mitigate the spread of the virus.

The current diocesan COVID safety protocols are:

- The obligation to attend Sunday and Holy Day Mass in person was restored effective Sunday, August 15, 2021. That obligation remains in effect. Those who are sick, have a health risk, or are a primary caregiver, are excused from this obligation.
- The practice of extending the Sign of Peace at Mass is suspended until further notice.
- The distribution of the Precious Blood continues to be suspended until further notice.
- Given the high transmissibility rates, mask-wearing is urgently encouraged for all attending Mass regardless of vaccination status.
- Priests, deacons, and all Eucharistic Ministers must continue to wear masks during the distribution of Holy Communion and at all times, except when speaking.
- All greeters and ushers must wear masks while welcoming parishioners, should maintain social-distancing, and should refrain from hand-shaking with fellow parishioners.

As we mark the end of 2021 and look with hope to a New Year filled with God's continued blessings, Bishop Zubik asks each of us to please join with him in praying for an end to the spread of COVID-19, and for health and happiness for all.