

## St. Irenaeus Catholic Church

### Update Regarding COVID Liturgical Safety Protocols

Archbishop Vigneron released a letter last week with updated COVID safety protocols for parishes and schools. This was in response to the new guidance for fully vaccinated individuals as released by both the Centers for Disease Control and State of Michigan. The Archbishop has asked pastors to determine how best to adopt protocols for the particular needs of their respective parishes, keeping in mind our need to care for the common good and to protect the most vulnerable among us. It is important to emphasize the following statement from the Archbishop:

***“Because a parish community – and our society – requires mutual trust and a commitment to the common good, each individual is asked to make the best decisions for himself as well as for others. Parishes do not have the responsibility to verify who is and who is not vaccinated.”***

As we move forward with updating the liturgical protocols for our St. Irenaeus family, it is essential that we exercise patience and charity towards each other, respecting the different circumstances we may be in and the informed choices that we make. For some, these changes are a welcome adjustment. For others, it will take more time to feel comfortable with the adjustments. At all times, we must respect the privacy of each other, and acknowledge the differences in comfort levels that we have with attending public worship.

Below are updated COVID liturgical safety protocols for St. Irenaeus, effective immediately for weekend and weekday Masses.

- Fully vaccinated individuals - may wear a face-covering and social distance but are no longer required to do so in church. In general, the CDC considers people “fully vaccinated” two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine as with Johnson & Johnson.
- A portion of the church will be designated where social distancing and face-coverings are consistently maintained. This section is for anyone, vaccinated or unvaccinated, who prefers to wear masks and social distance among people doing the same. Unvaccinated individuals are not required to sit in this section but are asked to continue to wear masks and maintain social distancing for their own protection and well-being, and that of others.
- Greeters and ushers will be glad to guide you and will assist those with mobility needs.
- Priests, deacons, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will continue to wear masks while distributing Holy Communion. Proper sanitizing will also continue.
- We will continue to refrain from the distribution of the Precious Blood.
- Sanitization stations will continue to be available in the Gathering Area.
- Ushers and greeters will continue to wear masks while these new guidelines are implemented.
- Sunday Mass will continue to be broadcast on the parish website.
- Protocols for funerals, weddings, and other liturgical events will be communicated separately.
- Respect, charity, patience, and kindness must guide our behavior as we move forward.

As stated in the Archbishop’s letter, these updated liturgical protocols should be a sign that great progress has been made in the last year. But we still need to be vigilant in the weeks and months ahead. We wish to thank everyone for their cooperation with the COVID safety protocols over the past year.

**Advanced registration will no longer be required for weekend Masses beginning with the Memorial Day weekend of May 29-30. Please continue to arrive early for Mass to assist in the seating process.**