



# ARCHDIOCESE of BALTIMORE

Catholic Center | 320 Cathedral Street | Baltimore, MD 21201

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December 29, 2021

## COVID-19 Safety Protocols Beginning on December 29, 2021

(Unless mandated by local or State order, these measures are to remain in effect until the end of January 2022. At that time, a re-evaluation will occur to determine if an extension is required.)

1. All parishes in jurisdictions where safety mandates exist (Howard County, Baltimore County & Baltimore City) are required to follow those mandates. Masking is required until orders are lifted by the authorizing agency.
2. If additional counties or the State implements a masking order, all parishes must comply with such orders.
3. **ALL parishes**, regardless of masking mandates within the local jurisdiction, are to require **all liturgical ministers and clergy to wear masks**, except when speaking, until the end of January.
4. All parishes, regardless of masking mandates within the local jurisdiction, are to make a full and good faith effort to encourage all attendees to be masked while attending mass.
5. Carefully evaluate all ministries and activities that are occurring during the month of January and determine, to the extent possible, how to transition them to a virtual mode or limited contact-mode. This effort to limit parish activities includes third party use of facilities such as Scouts, community groups and other such gatherings.
6. For in-person ministry activity that remains, masking will be required for **ALL parishes and ALL participants**. All other safety protocols including, hand sanitization, best attempts of social distancing (a minimum of 3 feet) and proper contact tracing in the event of a positive case occurring among the attendees, must be undertaken.
7. Individual third party users of facilities for events such as a wedding reception, family reunions etc. that are already scheduled during January, may proceed as planned. However, parishes should not accept any new request for third party use of facilities for the month of January. Any events reserved after January should include the stipulation that the parish has the option to cancel the event due to COVID-19 safety concerns.
8. Catholic Center support to parishes will be provided remotely, whenever possible for the month of January.
9. Please consider re-scheduling any parish, in-person social gathers scheduled for the month of January for February or later in the year.
10. During liturgical celebrations, each parish is to carefully evaluate the logistics of continuing with choirs. If the parishes determine the choir can safely perform based upon spacing and other considerations, then the parish can continue with choirs. However if a parish is concerned about the feasibility to continue with the choir due to logistics, then the parish should begin using only a single cantor. This will be reevaluated at the end of January.

11. All parishes must carefully adhere to proper hand sanitization following the distribution of communion on the tongue. It has been suggested an alcohol spray may be more effective and less messy. Example: [Hand Sanitizer](#).
12. Parishes can continue with making holy water available in fonts. However, proper hand sanitization needs to be available for those who wish to sanitize prior to or following the blessing of themselves with the holy water.

Reminder: Each parish should effectively communicate safety measures to its congregations and visitors. (building signage, social media, email, Flocknote, web posting, bulletin, announcements during Mass).

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