



ST. MARK CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Phone: (314) 743-8600

May 15, 2021

Dear St. Mark Parishioners,

The Office of Communications for the Archdiocese sent a memo with covid updates. Regarding masks it states, "The mask mandate now only applies to all parish faithful *who have not received a vaccination against the COVID-19 virus.*"

I believe it is important to note that there are many valid reasons for and against receiving the vaccine. **Please respect a person's decision to be vaccinated or not to be, as well as a person's private medical information.** We can't allow this to become divisive. We remain a parish family and are to be loving, prayerful, and supportive of each other.

The memo further states, "capacity restrictions and social-distancing measures at archdiocesan parishes will be determined by the parish pastor based on the size and construct of the parish, and what he deems is needed to provide for the safest possible environment." At the moment, with every other pew closed, we have enough room for all who would like to attend Mass in person. Therefore, for the time being, the pews will remain roped off as they currently are. The cafeteria will remain as an option for additional Mass seating.

"Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski leaves in place the dispensation for Sunday Mass at this time, but will be re-evaluating the need for the dispensation in the coming weeks." While you are currently dispensed from the Sunday Mass obligation if you yet feel unsafe attending Mass in person, you do still have the obligation to participate in Mass by watching it at home on Sunday. I'm pleased to announce that installation is complete for a **new live-streaming system for our parish**. We will live-stream Mass daily for the benefit of those currently remaining at home, and for parishioners who, even after the dispensation is lifted, are homebound due to illness or infirmity. See the parish website stmarkstl.com for the link and other info.

Regarding school, the memo states, "Archdiocesan schools will continue the mitigation strategies they have had in place that have led to a successful full year of in-person learning. These guidelines, created in cooperation with local health departments, remain in place for the last two weeks of school. This includes all end-of-year activities." This means that for the remainder of this school year, we will continue to take temperatures at drop-off, wear masks, and practice distancing. Updated guidelines for school and sports for this summer and fall are still being considered.

Thank you for your practice of Faith and for all your efforts in the past year to keep the parish as safe as possible. God bless you!

Fr. Hecktor