

## Policy Change

Last weekend, Blessed Sacrament eased the mask order for those who are fully vaccinated. What that means is that anyone who has received their final shot at least two weeks ago is not required to wear a mask in church. Those who are not vaccinated, however, are still expected to do so. Where the enforcement of this policy is the “honor system,” I would hope that all would respect it and take it seriously. The virus has been shown to spread through the water vapors that we inhale and exhale. The mask helps keep an infected person from giving it to another. In other words, your mask helps to protect those sitting around you. Where Sangamon County has one of the highest vaccination rates, there are still many who are unable to be vaccinated due to their young age or a specific health condition. We want them to feel welcomed and comfortable when they come to Mass.

For fourteen months we have been wearing those darn masks. I suppose it is a small act of kindness that we do for the sake of others; but I began to wonder if I really love my neighbor that much? Masks make my nose itch, my glasses fog up and by the end of Mass I am winded and tired. I hope God noticed what I did. Yet, on the other hand, I hope God didn't notice when I got irritated or complained about my fate. I am ashamed to think how little was asked of me in comparison to Jesus who suffered for my salvation without complaint. How far I still have to go! I wonder if I will ever be able to say to Jesus that I offer you everything...and really mean it. One thing I have learned during these past fourteen months is that if my love for the Lord is to be truly honest it must be about more than the words I say in prayer. It is about the charity I show to my neighbor. I cannot simply sign up for the big jobs God has asked others to do, until I am willing to do the little ones with the same love and charity. It is there where one's faith is tested.

This weekend we celebrate the **Feast of Pentecost**. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to be with us until the day he returns. When this Holy Spirit lives in us, certain qualities or fruits are present. They include: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Take time this week to examine your own life and ask: Is this fruit growing in me?

*Father Jeff*  
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