

Effective Wednesday, May 19, New York State relaxed the requirements for Masking and Social Distancing in Public Settings.

Stores, restaurants, public events – and churches – have had to adapt quickly to a two-tier system to provide space for persons needing to Mask and Social Distance and also provide for Vaccinated persons opting to go without Masks and forgo Social Distancing.

At Catholic parishes – where the Celebration of Mass and the Reception of Holy Communion – in person – is the pinnacle of our faith, we have the special challenge to welcome EVERYONE to a safe and accommodating environment. We are particularly concerned with welcoming families with children to attend Mass. Our children under age 12 are not able to be vaccinated. In mid-May, we welcomed over 70 children to receive Holy Communion for the first time. We want these children – and ALL children, families and adults to feel safe and comfortable coming to Mass – and to receive Communion regularly.

To provide for Social-Distanced seating, we will continue to offer our reservation system for the NORTH SIDE of the Church. In this area, Masks will be required. [Note the change – North/Mary side of Church = Social Distancing + Masks.]

To accommodate Vaccinated persons who may choose Non-Social Distanced seating, we have removed spacing for the SOUTH SIDE of the Church, including the side seats and the Tabernacle Chapel. Vaccinated persons seated in these areas may sit next to other households and may remove their masks in those areas. [Note the revision: South/Tabernacle side of church = Non-Social Distanced + Masks optional.]

We will continue to adapt our seating areas, as guidelines from NYS and from the Diocese continue to change.

The Department of Health strongly recommends masks for all, when there is a mix of both Vaccinated and Un-vaccinated persons. Since our aisles and entryways can be congested at Arrival and Departure times – and conversations develop at these points, we encourage everyone to wear a mask when arriving and leaving Church, as a sign of respect for one another.

**Finally, the Bishops of the Dioceses of Upstate New York – Buffalo, Odgensburg, Syracuse AND Rochester have announced that the Obligation to attend Mass – for those who are able to do so – will be reinstated, effective on the weekend of June 5 and 6.**

Thank you for your continued patience and cooperation as we move forward.