



MEMORANDUM

To: Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Leaders, Parishes, and Religious Houses

From: Reverend David J. Cirata

Re: Wearing of Masks/Facial Coverings

Date: 23 July 2020

*I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord.
Should they cry to me in any distress,
I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.*

-Entrance Antiphon: Masses for Various Occasions: A. In Any Need

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bishop Daniel Thomas has strongly encouraged the wearing of face masks/coverings in our church buildings. Earlier this month, in response to the Ohio Public Health Advisory System and the Department of Health's order regarding the wearing of masks in public places in counties carrying an emergency status of level 3 (red) or level 4 (purple), pastors/administrators/pastoral leaders were advised to follow the guidance issued by state, county, and local public health officials.

On Wednesday, July 22, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine announced that beginning this evening, Thursday, July 23, at 6:00 p.m., a statewide mask mandate will go into effect for citizens living in all 88 Ohio counties. All individuals in Ohio must wear a face mask/covering at all times while in public at indoor locations which are not a residence. Until notified otherwise, all pastors/administrators/pastoral leaders are to follow and implement this mandate, exercising the best practical, prudent, and pastoral judgement, showing sensitivity to those who are medically unable to wear a mask, and realizing that officiants of religious services are exempt.

While the wearing of face masks/coverings can be an inconvenience and a sacrifice, it is a charitable act that offers protection and conveys a sense of concern and respect for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Bishop Thomas is grateful for the pastoral care that our parishioners continue to receive through you and for your witness to our unity in faith shown in our mutual concern for the health and well-being of those entrusted to our care and of the broader community.

Our Lady, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us!