

December 15, 2021

As it has from the beginning of the pandemic, the Diocese of Providence will continue to cooperate fully with state directives regarding the response to the pandemic.

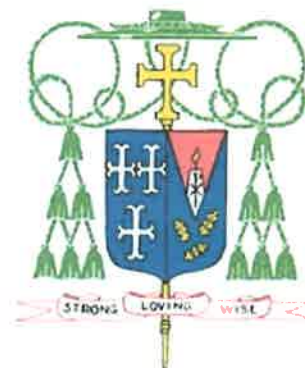
Accordingly, I encourage Catholics of the Diocese of Providence to follow state guidelines and to wear a mask whenever they are attending Holy Mass, and other church services or public programs.

At the same time, no individual should be turned away from Mass or singled out if they choose not to wear a mask. Such individuals may have good and substantive reasons for not doing so. In addition, in keeping with our approved policies, liturgical ministers, (e.g. priests, deacons, ministers of Holy Communion, altar servers, cantors, choir members,) are not expected to wear masks while actively participating in the liturgy.

As I have done on multiple previous occasions, I strongly urge all Catholics of the Diocese of Providence (clergy, religious and laity) to receive approved vaccines as soon as they are eligible to do so. Being vaccinated is a commitment to the common good, an act of charity for our brothers and sisters, and an expression of our respect for the dignity of human life.

As we prepare to celebrate the special hope and joy of the Christmas Season, let us renew our fervent prayers that Almighty God will lift this terrible pandemic from our midst and will give healing, comfort and peace to all.

+Thomas J. Tobin
Bishop of Providence



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