



DIOCESE OF ST. CATHARINES

P.O. Box 875
St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada
L2R 6Z4

THE CHANCERY

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DIOCESAN POLICY REGARDING THE MANDATORY USE OF FACE COVERINGS

1. This Diocesan Policy is effective for all parishes in the Diocese of St. Catharines from July 31 until October 1, 2020, unless extended.
2. PARISHES IN THE NIAGARA REGION
The wearing of face coverings is mandatory for those **five years old and older** who enter the church for any public gathering including Masses, funerals, weddings (excluding the bride and groom), and other liturgies.
PARISHES IN HALDIMAND COUNTY
The wearing of face coverings is mandatory for those **ten years old and older** who enter the church for any public gathering including Masses, funerals, weddings (excluding the bride and groom), and other liturgies.
3. Face coverings are to fit securely to the head and be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the mouth, nose and chin without gaping.
4. Face coverings are to be removed for the reception of Communion. Those who wish to receive Communion on the tongue are asked to approach the priest after others have received Communion.
5. For those unable to wear a face covering, the by-law does not require them to disclose the reason for their exemption. If a person's inability to wear a face covering is related to a serious condition, it may be advisable for them to remain home during the pandemic.
6. Those who declare an exemption are not to be denied entry. Parishes may have special designated seating for those unable to wear a face covering, if this is considered appropriate.
7. No one will be denied entry into a church if they fail to comply. Any individual, or any parent/guardian of a minor child who does not comply with the Diocesan Policy and the mandatory face covering by-law will be solely responsible for any penalty or fine that might be levied by the Municipality or County for non-compliance.
8. All ushers are to wear a face covering.
9. Please address any questions to your parish or to the Catholic Centre at diocese@saintcd.com.
10. For the full text of the face covering by-law for Haldimand County:
<https://www.haldimandcounty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2191-20-mask-bylaw.pdf>
For full text of the face covering by-law for the Regional Municipality of Niagara:
<https://www.niagararegion.ca/government/bylaws/pdf/by-law-2020-46-face-covering.pdf>

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