

Diocese of Scranton
**Guidelines for Public Masses
During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

December 10th, 2021



The Diocese of Scranton joyfully welcomes the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton to return to Masses at all its parishes. Despite the challenges of the last year, we invite those who have not yet returned to Mass to rejoin us in person to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, the source and summit of the Christian life.

On Friday, December 10th, our Most Revered Bishop released updated information concerning the Diocesan Guidelines for Public Masses for the Christmas Season during the Covid-19 Pandemic. I take this opportunity to share these updated guidelines with you.

COVID-19 Protocol Reminders for Christmas 2021

- The Diocese of Scranton **strongly recommends** that all parishioners wear a mask while attending Mass, regardless of vaccination status. As Catholics, we have a responsibility to protect our friends and neighbors and mask wearing remains an important mitigation tool against community spread.
- Anyone who is sick should stay home and participate in the celebration of Mass through Catholic Television or a parish livestream Mass. In addition, anyone displaying COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, headache, or muscle pain) should not attend Mass in-person.
- Again, we encourage the reception of Holy Communion in the hand rather than orally during the time of the pandemic. You are also strongly encouraged to keep proper SOCIAL DISTANCING as you approach the Minister of Holy Communion. Again, masks are encouraged for all.
- The Sign of Peace is to be celebrated without physical contact between non-family members.
- **SOCIAL GATHERING PRIOR TO OR AFTER MASS WITHIN THE CHURCH REMAINS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. YOUR COOPERATION IS APPRECIATED AND EXPECTED.**
- **THERE IS TO BE NO STANDING IN THE VESTIBULE OF THE CHURCH DURING MASS OR ANY OTHER SERVICES.**

