


DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Memo

To: Priest and Deacons

From: Bishop Jaime Soto 

Date: November 9, 2022

Re: Updated Diocesan COVID Guidelines

COVID related hospitalizations, deaths and cases are down from the highs seen during the summer surge and last winter: <https://covid19.ca.gov>.

I hereby update our COVID liturgy guidelines for the Diocese of Sacramento:

- Face masks for ministers of Holy Communion are no longer required, nor are they required for other moments of ministry that require proximity: anointing and pouring of water during the Rite of Baptism, the anointing during Confirmation, the imposition of hands for Absolution during Confession, etc... Those who prefer to wear a face mask during these moments of the liturgy should be encouraged to do so.
- Cotton swabs are no longer required for the anointing of the sick.
- Deacons, who are assisting in the celebration of the Holy Mass, may receive from the chalice again, given their union with the priest in offering the Sacrifice of the Mass, as directed by the GIRM (182).
- The offering of the chalice during the distribution of Holy Communion for the faithful is still suspended. I will assess this again in the spring of 2023.
- Please return to a regular use of your Altar Servers and Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist.
- Liturgy of the Word for Children may resume.
- The appropriate use and disposition of water during the rite of baptism are at the discretion of the pastor.
- The use of hand sanitizer and the frequent washing of hands is strongly encouraged.

In conformity with guidance from federal public health directives, the quarantine guidelines for clergy returning from international travel are not mandatory any longer, but strongly encouraged.

In general, I continue to encourage clergy and the faithful to get vaccinated. All who prefer to use face masks during liturgy are encouraged to do so.