

Letter Regarding the California State Mask Requirement for Indoor Setting

Dear Parishioners,

The California Department of Public Health announced on Dec. 13, 2021, that it is requiring masks to be worn in all indoor public settings, irrespective of vaccine status, from Dec. 15, 2021, through Jan. 15, 2022. In response to this new State requirement, Bishop Jaime Soto has asked all parishes of the Diocese to direct all the faithful to wear masks while indoors regardless of one's vaccination status.

Based on the official State website (<https://covid19.ca.gov/masks-and-ppe/>), the following individuals are exempt from wearing masks at all times:

Children under two years old, due to the risk of suffocation.

People with:

- A medical condition
- Mental health condition
- Disability that precludes wearing a mask.

This includes:

- Those for whom a mask could obstruct breathing
- Who are unconscious or incapacitated
- Unable to remove a mask without assistance
- People for whom seeing the mouth is essential for communication:
 - Hearing impaired
 - Those communicating with a person who is hearing impaired.
 - People for whom wearing a mask would create a risk as they work, as determined by Local, state, or federal regulators, or Workplace safety guidelines.

As Bishop Soto has said in his letter addressed to the priests, "as we prepare to celebrate the charity of the Father who sent his Son, Jesus, to a weary and wounded humanity, let us persevere in exercising sensible public health protocols during the celebration of the Sacrifice of the Mass as well as other liturgical celebrations and indoor pastoral activities... Through the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary may God's mercy bring an end to the pandemic, healing to all afflicted, protection to those who care for them, eternal rest to all who have died and comfort to those who mourn."

I thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Be assured of my prayers for all of you as I rely on yours.

Fr. Fredhelito Gucor
Pastor