

**Face Coverings Outdoors** - In accordance with the recent announcement from Maryland Governor Hogan that lifts much of the requirement to wear face coverings outdoors, those parishes hosting outdoor Masses **may elect** to have attendees go **without** face coverings.

—It is still important to maintain 6 ft. of social distancing between those who are not members of the same households.

—As to require masking of the celebrant or others involved in the ministry of the Mass, it is within the discretion of the pastor as to whether masks will be required. Priests and Eucharistic ministers are encouraged, but not required, to continue to wear masks while distributing communion.

—Before establishing this new guidance, each parish should verify with their city or county authorities to ensure the jurisdiction is following the most recent masking order of the governor.

—Parish activities, other than Mass, which are held outdoors are also permitted to discontinue the wearing of masks, so long as the nature of the activity lends itself toward adhering to social distancing. Again this is subject to verifying the local jurisdiction has adopted the new order from the governor.

—For activities outdoors provided for children, faces coverings are required. Given that children are not eligible to be vaccinated and social distancing is often difficult to maintain, masking should be continued. The one exemption would be for those activities, such as sports, that require vigorous movement. However, the mask is to be immediately replaced once the sports activity has discontinued.

**Holy Water** - Parishes are encouraged to resume use of Holy Water fonts. Hand sanitizer should be available in close proximity to the fonts to permit cleansing of the hands. Fonts are to be cleaned regularly, following proper protocols for handling of Holy Water, to ensure the cleanliness of the font.

**Updated COVID Guidance** – In response to an increased number of people getting COVID-19 vaccines, state-level restrictions changing and the loosening of some CDC recommendations, the COVID-19 Task Force is completing its recent review and updating the Archdiocese’s

COVID-19 Guidance manual. The new version will be sent out next week. Thank you for your patience.