



**To:** *Pastors and Administrators*  
*Parish, School, and Youth Leaders*  
*Parents and Guardians*  
**From:** *Louis P. De Angelo, Ed.D.*  
*Secretary for Catholic Education*  
**Re:** *Masks*  
**Date:** *September 1, 2021*

**This memo pertains to Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 students in Maryland.**

In our letter dated August 16, 2021, we noted that changing circumstances may require Catholic schools, parish religious education programs, and CYM sports and events to pivot in their COVID procedures. Our monitoring of the increased number of COVID cases, the decision of the Maryland State Board of Education to require masks in schools, and the information about quarantines from the county health departments have caused us to re-evaluate our decision regarding masks for students and staff in Catholic schools, parish religious education programs, and CYM sports and events.

As you know, the Maryland State Board of Education approved a ruling last week requiring students and staff to wear masks indoors in public schools. While we are not certain this requirement is a mandate for non-public schools and programs, we believe it has merit at this time when county rates of positivity for COVID stand at the current numbers.

Furthermore, we recognize that if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID in our schools or programs, county health departments may require entire groups of students to quarantine since not all students would be masked. With everyone masked, fewer students would need to quarantine.

Therefore, all students, staff, and visitors in Catholic schools, religious education programs, and CYM sports and events will be required to wear masks indoors beginning September 1. While requiring masks was not our initial decision in mid-August, circumstances have changed. We shall revisit this current decision as necessary.

- PreK-3 and PreK-4 students will follow the same regulations as students in Grades K-12.
- Students engaged indoors in classroom instruction, sports, practices, activities, programs, rehearsals, assemblies, etc. are to be masked. Adults present with students indoors are to be masked.

- Students outdoors for classes, recess, sports, programs, etc., are not required to be masked.
- Spectators at indoor events are to be masked; spectators at outdoor events do not need to mask.
- Masks are required on school busses.
- Masks are to be fitted tightly on the face, especially over the nose, under the chin, and no gaps on the cheeks.

Vaccination remains our primary means to reduce the county rates for COVID positivity. Please encourage family and neighbors to be vaccinated.

Thank you for your cooperation and support. Let us continue to ask Mary, our Mother, to intercede for the health and safety of all.