

# A letter from our Pastor...

St Raymond De Penafort  
"Welcome. Love. Serve."  
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Dear St. Raymond Family:

With the recent news from the CDC and public health departments regarding masks, I want to provide an update on our own parish operations. In consultation with our Parish Reopening Team, we are going to maintain our mask requirement for all Mass and liturgy attendees until we reach Phase 5 and receive additional state and local guidance regarding mask requirements. We came to this decision for several reasons:

- Given that less than 40% of adults in Illinois state are fully vaccinated, the majority of our adult Mass attendees and visitors remain susceptible to infection and will still need to wear a mask at Mass.
- The vast majority of children under age 18 are not yet vaccinated and we wish to continue to welcome families in-person to fully participate in Mass.
- We do not wish to cause discomfort or division in our community by enforcing the requirement of the Archdiocese of Chicago that proof of vaccination be required at the door of the church in order to begin to eliminate masks at liturgies.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have operated with the health and safety of everyone in our community as the foremost priority. Collectively, we have lifted one another up in prayer and love, adhered to protocols and guidelines, and committed to a unified approach to overcoming the challenges of the pandemic. It is with that spirit of unity that we continue moving forward.

As always, I thank you for your patience as our staff and volunteers work hard to make the celebration of Mass and our liturgies beautiful and safe as we continue to manage within important health guidelines. Let us continue to live in a manner worthy of the call we have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1-3)

Peace be with you,



Fr. Scott Hebden, Pastor