

Memo

To: Priests of the Archdiocese
From: Father Jim Fischler, CICM
Vicar for Clergy
Date: March 4, 2021
Re: Coronavirus Update #13

Priests are asked to share the information in this memo with their parishioners at Masses this weekend -- March 6-7 -- and to include the information in parish bulletins as well as their social media platforms.

For one year we have been faced with restrictions and other safety measures enacted to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19. These have greatly impacted our lives and our ministry as Church.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott has announced that effective March 10, 2021, he would lift the mandate to wear masks in public. He also announced that all businesses could operate at 100 percent of capacity.

San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, MSPS, has determined, after reviewing the governor's order, and after seeking advice from health authorities and local civic officials, that all of the safety measures in place at the current time are to be continued throughout the Archdiocese of San Antonio until further notice. This regards the use of face coverings or masks; social distancing; hand washing; and regular use of sanitizing procedures that have been effective in keeping us safe. These will not be changed at this time.

Pastors are asked to continue offering the parish Masses to the faithful via livestreaming or by other video means.

The availability of three options for vaccination against COVID is a positive development and priests are encouraged to receive vaccinations as soon as possible. Priests are also asked to encourage their parishioners to receive the vaccinations as soon as they can. A link to the statement on the archdiocesan website from the USCCB addressing moral concerns about the vaccines follows and can be shared with the faithful.

"While Pfizer and Moderna vaccines should be chosen over Johnson and Johnson's where possible, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said in a statement March 2 that it is "morally acceptable" to receive vaccines when "ethically irreproachable" options are not available.

"Given the world-wide suffering that this pandemic is causing, we affirm again that being vaccinated can be an act of charity that serves the common good," the statement said.

The statement was an update to one released in December that echoed the Vatican's statement, saying that Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were morally acceptable despite their "remote connection to morally compromised cell lines" due to the gravity of the pandemic."

<https://www.usccb.org/news/2021/us-bishop-chairmen-doctrine-and-pro-life-address-use-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine>

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