



DIOCESE OF BEAUMONT

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

August 21, 2021

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We continue the journey together through these difficult days of global pandemic. There are no simple answers to the many complex questions that exist for each of our families, parishes, schools, and workplaces. It has become clear that those who have been vaccinated have a very low chance of grave illness, while the unvaccinated make up 95% of the hospitalized. Thus, once again, I encourage all those eligible to receive the vaccination, and as Pope Francis said this week, “this is an act of love” for all those around us.

Face coverings continue to be a contentious issue in our society, and so while not enforcing their use at church, school, and religious education, I encourage masks especially for those who desire added protection, and also to respect each other’s choices. We will continue to sanitize our churches regularly and provide sections allowing for social distancing. The sign of peace remains suspended for the time being to eliminate additional contact.

As a reminder, for those who are sick and/or vulnerable, for concerned caregivers, and those worried about sinning against the Third Commandment, I once again want to remind you that Canon Law allows you to use your best judgement and if needed avoid the crowds at Mass at this moment in time. Please participate virtually until your health has been restored and/or the Delta-variant has abated. If you are homebound, please reach out to your parish to arrange for Holy Communion to be brought to you.

This weekend I celebrate my first anniversary as the Bishop of Beaumont. I so deeply love our community here in Southeast Texas and I am grateful for the warm reception I have received since my arrival. Please know that I will continue to consult widely and pray profoundly as I shepherd our flock through these challenging times. Let us continue to pray for the safety and protection of our healthcare workers and for the quick recovery of those affected by the coronavirus. We will continue to assess the situation regularly and make adjustments regarding our safety protocols depending on our ongoing situation. Profound personal responsibility is needed in times such as these. Thank you for all your prayers and support.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. David L. Toups
Bishop of the Diocese of Beaumont