



Office of the Bishop  
Diocese of Saint Cloud

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Dear pastor,

As you know, I sent you a letter earlier this week regarding COVID-19 protocols for camps, overnight events and similar programs. Some people who have read the letter have misconstrued what I am requiring and what I am not. I would like to clarify a few points.

As I stated, I believe receiving a COVID-19 vaccination is the best way to keep oneself and others safe and healthy and make continued progress against this virus. This is in line with what has been stated by the Minnesota Department of Health. Our Holy Father also has been very clear in his strong encouragement of Catholics to get vaccinated.

Because participants in multi-day camps, multi-day retreats and similar programs are in close contact for one or more overnights, I am requiring those who participate in these optional, voluntary events in the diocese to be vaccinated as the best way to keep everyone safe from the virus. Those who can't be, or don't wish to be, vaccinated cannot attend these particular events at this time. The status of the virus and recommendations of health officials remain fluid, and I will continue to re-evaluate the situation and make changes to this protocol as warranted.

Those who wish to attend overnight programs sponsored by and in another diocese are allowed to do so as long as they follow the protocols set forth by the diocese where the event is held.

Those who attend Mass, parish events and other parish activities in the Diocese of Saint Cloud are **not required** to receive a vaccine as a condition of participation.

As I noted in my previous letter, I **strongly encourage** that only fully vaccinated individuals distribute Holy Communion — again as the best way to keep people safe, especially those who have not yet been vaccinated. However, this is **not a mandate**. The final decision regarding how to distribute Communion safely in a particular parish is left to each pastor.

I hope this helps to clarify the points of my previous letter. Thank you again for your good ministry during this time of the pandemic.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Donald J. Kettler  
Bishop of Saint Cloud