

November 8, 2020

Dear Members of the County Council,

All Catholic Churches within Montgomery County have done a great deal to ensure the safety of all their members during the pandemic. Not one case of Covid-19 has been traced to gathering for worship. Every church has complied to wearing masks, air circulation, social distancing, distancing within the church itself, and cleaning the spaces used and areas of high touch. I have attended mass once churches were allowed to open back up and have not seen anyone fail to wear their mask. The priests and deacons are also very diligent about their use of masks as well.

I state these things to ask you to consider allowing churches to remain at their current level of attendance. People who feel they are at greater risk have opted to attend virtually. Others have been so positively impacted by the ability to worship in person. Please also keep in mind the mental and psychological effects of isolation and denial of our right to worship, as well as the physical effects of Covid-19.

Thank you for considering my concerns as you meet to deliberate the recent proposals of the County Executive.

Eileen Smith