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**To the people of the Archdiocese of Mobile:**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,**

As we prepare to begin a new academic year in our Catholic schools, all of us are aware that COVID-19 remains a serious health issue. I wish to thank all who serve in our Catholic schools for their outstanding efforts last year in providing both excellent education and safety for our students. I have great confidence in them again this year.

It was my hope that this school year would be much more normal than last year. That remains my hope. At the same time, we all know that COVID-19 numbers are once again on the increase. For this reason, we will begin classes with the requirement that all students in grades K-12, all school personnel, and all visitors will be required to wear masks while indoors at school.

The pandemic remains an ever-changing situation. Only recently I announced that masks would not be required for students in grades 7-12. As much as I do not wish to do this, I feel compelled to now alter this and require masks due to the changes in the situation and the new guidance from the CDC and the Alabama Department of Public Health. I think that this is important for the health of our students, families, and teachers. We will continue to monitor the situation and adjust the mask mandate when circumstances allow.

School principals will be in contact with families to share further information about COVID-19 precautions.

I am deeply grateful to the parents and families of our students who have been most cooperative and supportive of our efforts to provide our young people with education in a safe environment. I ask for your continued cooperation and prayers.

May God bless you all.

Sincerely in the Lord,

*+ Thomas J. Rodi*

Most Reverend Thomas J. Rodi  
Archbishop of Mobile