



DIOCESE OF LAKE CHARLES

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Office of the Bishop

March 18, 2020

Memorial of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

My dear People of God,

You are in my daily prayers. I remembered you this morning as I approached the Altar of God. I know because of your messages to me that, although you understand these drastic measures, you still hunger for the Most Blessed Sacrament. I look forward to returning to our churches again for Mass. Let us not take for granted the gift of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist.

Today, I am writing you because although we might not have public access to Mass, God's graces are abundant! Among these graces are Indulgences. The Church teaches us that "indulgences are the remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven" (*Compendium of the Catholic Church*, 312). Many actions allow us to participate in these moments of God's grace. Among these acts are the devout reading of Sacred Scripture for at least thirty minutes; the devout participation in the Stations of Cross (at a church or even at home with our family); and the devout recitation of the Rosary. These three acts, along with many others, allow us to receive a plenary (or full) indulgence for our sins, the sins of a deceased loved one, or even a particular soul in purgatory, who will then become our spiritual friend and intercessor in heaven.

In order to receive the plenary (full) indulgence, the faithful must complete three acts within seven days before or after the act. First, they must receive Holy Communion. Second, they must make a Sacramental Confession. Third, they must pray for our Holy Father, the Pope, and his intentions by at least reciting an "Our Father" and a "Hail Mary." By means of the attached Decree, I hereby dispense the faithful of the Diocese of Lake Charles from the obligation of receiving Holy Communion in order to obtain a plenary (full) indulgence. This dispensation is in effect as long as the suspension of public Masses is in place in the Diocese of Lake Charles.

With prayers for you and your families and asking the intercession of Our Lady Star of the Sea, I remain,

Devotedly yours in our Lord,


✠Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

Enclosure: Decree



WHEREAS “the Church today still invites all its children to weigh well and reflect on the real effectiveness of the practice of indulgences in fostering the life of individuals and of the Christian community as a whole” (Paul VI, Apostolic constitution *Indulgentiarum doctrina*, 9);

WHEREAS “beside the exclusion of all attachment to sin, even venial sin, the requirements for gaining a plenary indulgence are the performance of the indulgenced work and fulfillment of three conditions: sacramental confession [within several days (about 20) of the act], Eucharistic communion [within several days (about 20) of the act], and prayer for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff [an “Our Father” and “Hail Mary” are suggested]” (*Manual of Indulgences*, 20 §1, and “The Gift of the Indulgence,” 5);

WHEREAS “local ordinaries ... may grant to the faithful subject to them ... who reside in places where they cannot go to confession or communion at all ... that they may gain a plenary indulgence without actual confession and communion, provided they have inner contrition and the resolution to go to these sacraments as soon as possible” (*Manual of Indulgences*, 25);


WHEREAS given the current suspension of all public liturgies and, consequently, the faithful’s inability to receive Holy Communion;


GLEN JOHN PROVOST
BISHOP OF LAKE CHARLES

DECREES

That, until the suspension of public liturgies is lifted, all the faithful subject to him may gain a plenary indulgence without having received communion, provided that they receive communion as soon as possible.

Given on day 18 of March in the Year of Our Lord 2020.

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✠ Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles


George Stearns
Chancellor