

# Catechesis

## Before lifting the Dispensation from the Obligation to Personally Participate in Sunday Mass Part I

At the very beginning of the Pandemic of the Coronavirus COVID-19, I issued a dispensation from the obligation to participate personally in the celebration of Holy Mass. The Book of Exodus lists the Divine Precept in regard to the Sabbath. One works for six days, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord. It reads: “Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.” (Ex. 20:8—10)

Christians have always considered Sunday, the day of the Resurrection of the Lord, as the new Sabbath. “On Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass personally.” (Code of Canon Law, #1247)

If you remember, when I issued the Dispensation it was a dispensation from personally participating in the Holy Mass: however, it was not a dispensation from “keeping the Sabbath, Sunday, holy. That is why I suggested that you watch Mass on television, on live-streaming from the Cathedral, St. Thomas, St. Joseph or your local parish. Another way of keeping Sunday holy was to either: pray the Holy Rosary together as a family; or read the Sunday Scriptures, discuss them and offer personal prayers for your family, the Church and our country.

This Dispensation from personal participation in Sunday Mass will end on Friday, May 21, 2021. This means that beginning on the weekend of May 21-22, 2021, Pentecost Sunday, all the faithful of the Diocese will again be bound to personally attend Mass.

Of course, all who are seriously ill, have limited mobility or a serious health concern continue to be dispensed from personal Sunday Mass attendance.

*It has been a long time since we have experienced a normal existence here on our beloved planet. However slowly, but surely, we are returning to a more normal way of life. Many parishioners may not have been able to personally attend and participate in the celebration of Holy Mass because of the pandemic. Surely many have longed with a deep desire to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion. We priests have longed for the day when the Churches will again be filled with the faithful. Now the time has come.*

*Please know that each of you will be welcomed with open arms as you return to your other home, your parish Church...your spiritual home!*

***Welcome back home!***