



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF LAS CRUCES

*Office of the Bishop*

March 3, 2021

To the Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Las Cruces

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

One of the obligations imposed upon all of us during the season of Lent is the observance of abstinence from eating meat on all Fridays of Lent, as well as Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The law on abstinence binds all those who have attained the age of fourteen.

Every year our Lenten austerity is interrupted by one or two solemnities, feast days of the highest rank that celebrate a mystery of faith such as the Trinity, an event in the life of Jesus, his mother Mary, or another important saint. The Solemnity of St. Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is commemorated on March 19<sup>th</sup> and, this year, that celebration falls on a Friday. This celebration is even more important in this year, announced by Pope Francis last December, as a special “Year of St. Joseph,” to be celebrated from December 8, 2020 through December 8, 2021.

Given that the Solemnity of St Joseph in this Year of St. Joseph falls on a Lenten Friday, I am happy to grant the dispensation of the obligation for abstinence from meat for the people of the Diocese of Las Cruces on Friday, March 19, 2021.

A most fitting way to celebrate the Solemnity of St. Joseph is the celebration of the Eucharistic Feast, the Mass, followed by a festive meal with your household along with a gift to the parish or community food pantry or soup kitchens to ensure that the poor will feast as well.

Sincerely yours,

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Most Reverend Peter Baldacchino  
Bishop of Las Cruces