



Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux

Office of the Bishop

2779 Highway 311 • Post Office Box 505 • Schriever, Louisiana 70395

(985) 850-3124 • Fax (985) 850-3224

DECREE

To the Clergy, the Religious and the Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux:

“The merits, infinite in value, of Jesus Christ, the Divine Redeemer of the human race, and those of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the Saints... are the unfailing treasury of Christ's Church and have been entrusted to her, so that they may be applied to the remission of sins and the consequences of sin, by virtue of the power of binding and loosing which the Founder of the Church himself conferred on Peter and the other Apostles, and through them on their successors, the Supreme Pontiffs and Bishops.” (*Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, 4th ed., 1999) The primary place of reception of these graces is through the celebration of the sacraments.

However, there are instances in the life of the Church wherein circumstances give the effect of making it temporarily impossible to receive these graces *sacramentally*, either through Holy Communion or the other sacraments. It, then, becomes all the more essential for the faithful in these times to avail themselves of the *extra-sacramental* graces, especially of the grace of the plenary (full or total) or partial remission of the temporal punishment due to sin which the Church willingly grants to her children who partake in specific works to which the Church attaches an **indulgence**.

Normally, aside from the faithful being detached from any sin, three conditions must be fulfilled in order for a person to receive the *plenary indulgence*, namely: sacramental confession, reception of Holy Communion and prayer for the Holy Father's intentions (satisfied by the recitation of one Our Father and one Hail Mary). These conditions are to be fulfilled within several days before or after the performance of the prescribed work (about 20 days).

Unfortunately, the restriction placed upon our society and the urgent need to uphold the health and safety of all citizens during these trying times involving the Corona Virus Disease or COVID-19 pandemic led to a very difficult decision to suspend all public celebrations of the Holy Mass in our diocese. With this suspension, our faithful have been prevented from the reception of Holy Communion, which is one of the usual conditions for the reception of a *plenary indulgence*.

It is my desire, therefore, as I continue to hold you in my heart, especially when I offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass or when I say my daily prayers, that this temporary deterrence should not prevent you from experiencing the abundance of God's grace that He bestows on us in all things, including these indulgences, in these days.


Therefore, by the faculty given to me in accord with Norm 25 of the Norms on Indulgences of the Manual of Indulgences, I **hereby grant permission to all the faithful subject to me to receive**

***plenary indulgences* even without the reception of Holy Communion provided that the other two conditions (sacramental confession and praying for the Holy Father's intentions) are fulfilled and that they have the intention to receive Holy Communion as soon as the suspension of public liturgies has been lifted.**

Moreover, the Apostolic Penitentiary has issued, on March 19, 2020, a decree that defined the prescribed works through which the *plenary indulgence* may be granted during this time:

- (a) when the faithful unite themselves spiritually through the media to the celebration of the Mass,
- (b) the recitation of the Holy Rosary,
- (c) the pious practice of the Way of the Cross or other forms of devotions,
- (d) at least recite the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, offering this trial in a spirit of faith in God and charity towards their brothers and sisters.

Given this 31st day of March in the Year of Our Lord 2020.



Most Rev. Shelton J. Fabre
Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux



Very Rev. Alex G. Gaudet
Chancellor

