



# DIOCESE OF DALLAS

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## DECREE DELAYING LIFTING OF DISPENSATION

In March of 2020, all Catholics of the Diocese of Dallas were dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation (canon 1247) as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

On July 15, 2021, I announced that this dispensation would be lifted on August 15, 2021. Unfortunately, in light of current circumstances surrounding COVID-19, **I am delaying the lifting of that dispensation and so hereby revoke the decree of July 15, 2021.**

Therefore, **the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation (canon 1247) as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic remains in effect until it is revoked by me or my successor at a future date.**

Additionally, the requirements of the Updated Phase 3 Decree, issued on April, 21 2021, remain in effect, especially the following:

- As pastors have had many months working through the pandemic and are best able to determine the needs and concerns of their parishes, it is left to the judgment of the pastors to make decisions concerning the following:
  - Maximum capacity requirements for Mass or other gatherings in parishes. While there is no diocesan-wide capacity requirement (either minimum or maximum), nor is there any requirement to leave every other row empty during Mass, pastors should establish a space (either a separate Mass time or a separated space in the church) that provides a fully socially-distanced environment for those with concerns about gathering.
  - Masking and other sanitary policies, with the expectation that masks be worn out of charity for others, especially in Dallas County, but parishes are not to single out or draw attention to those who are not wearing masks at Mass and other liturgical celebrations.
  - The frequency, gathering and seating requirements for any other event at parishes; pastors must remain mindful of the health concerns of their parishes and of the need to avoid unnecessarily large groupings of people.

Given on August 10, 2021 in the Diocese of Dallas.

Gregory Caridi  
Chancellor

Most Reverend Edward J. Burns  
Bishop of Dallas