

INFORMATION ON DISPENSATIONS FROM THE SUNDAY OBLIGATION

The general obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (including the anticipatory Mass at 4 p.m. or later on the previous day) is to be reinstated in the Diocese of Rapid City effective Saturday, March 27, 2021. Considering the grave obligation we have of being physically present with our brothers and sisters at Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation for the Eucharist, each of us is asked to make a good and sincere judgement as to whether these circumstances apply or not. Where doubt or confusion persists, consult any priest for clarity.

While the general dispensation is removed, there are specific instances where the dispensation will continue, as well as those circumstances where there is no obligation in the first place. One does not have an obligation to attend Mass on Sunday in the following circumstances:

1. You are ill or your health condition would be significantly compromised if you were to contract a communicable illness (i.e., you have underlying conditions or are in a high-risk category).
2. You exhibit flu-like symptoms.
3. You have good reason to think you might be asymptomatic of a contagious illness (e.g., you were in recent contact with someone who tested positive for a contagious illness such as COVID or influenza).
4. You care for the sick, homebound, or infirmed.
5. You are pregnant.
6. Those 65 years of age or older (per the CDC's recommendation of high-risk individuals).
7. You cannot attend Mass through no fault of your own (e.g., no Mass is offered, you are infirm, or, while wanting to go, you are prevented for some reason you cannot control e.g., your ride did not show up, the church was at capacity).
8. If you have significant fear or anxiety of becoming ill by being at Mass. For questions about the application of any of these, please contact your pastor.

These categories will be reviewed in due course and revised as needed. Those within categories #1-8 above must still observe the Lord's Day and are encouraged to spend time in prayer on Sunday, meditating on the Lord's passion, death and resurrection; an excellent way to do this is through participating in a broadcast of the Sunday Mass.