



Dispensation From Mass Obligation Ending June 12 in Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

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SPRINGFIELD – Bishop Thomas John Paprocki of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois announced that all Catholics across the diocese will be obligated to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation starting June 12, the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Those who believe they should continue to be dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass should speak to their parish priest, who may grant a dispensation in individual cases for a just reason. Those who are ill or may have come in contact with someone with COVID-19 are excused and do not need a dispensation.

“A dispensation by its very nature is to cease when the reason for the dispensation ceases,” Bishop Paprocki said. “In recent weeks, the number of cases of COVID-19 has continued to decrease dramatically. In light of these encouraging trends, government officials announced that the State of Illinois would enter Phase 5 beginning on June 11, which means that ‘businesses, large-scale events, conventions, amusement parks, and seated-spectator venues, among others, will be able to operate at full capacity for the first time since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.’ Clearly, the full reopening of secular society means that the time has come for the Church as well to withdraw all remaining particular dispensations from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

“It is good that our churches can again be opened to full capacity,” Bishop Paprocki said. “In fact, we have already seen increasing numbers in our churches over the past couple months, as the public health threat has receded. I pray that those who have not done so will return to full, active participation in the Mass. It is essential to be physically present celebrating with the community of faith and receiving the real presence of our Lord into our hearts in the holy Eucharist.”

Since April 11, a particular dispensation had been in place in the diocese in which only people in certain categories, such as those over 65 years old, were not obligated to attend Mass. Prior to April 11, a full general dispensation had been in place due to the pandemic.