

Following much careful consideration, the dispensation for Sunday Mass obligation has been lifted and beginning the weekend of Sept. 19 and 20, all Catholics will once again gather as a community of faith on Sundays. The lifting of the dispensation was announced in a decree issued by Bishop David Ricken on Monday, Sept. 7.

www.gbdioec.org/sundayobligationdecree

With this news, please note there are still occasions when the obligation to attend Sunday Mass does not apply:

- If individual Catholics struggle with serious health concerns or are physically or morally prevented from worshipping at Mass for a grave reason
- If individuals are frail due to illness or age or, in their well-formed consciences believe that going into public places -- including Sunday worship at Mass -- would place their health or the health of their loved ones in serious jeopardy
- If individuals are sick, or have been in contact with someone who has been sick

The faithful who are unable to attend Mass are urged to make holy the Lord's Day and to pray, read the Scriptures, watch a broadcast or livestreamed Mass and take part in acts of charity.

The diocese also issued guidelines for public Masses at www.gbdioec.org/sundayobligationreinstatement. These guidelines make clear that face masks are still required, and that, while restrictions will be lifted on the percentage of people at Mass, the standards of social distancing will still be upheld.

The obligation to attend Mass for Catholics reflects our faith in Jesus Christ, the blessing of the Holy Eucharist and an acknowledgment of His great love for us.