

MOST REVEREND  
ALEXANDER K. SAMPLE  
ARCHBISHOP OF PORTLAND IN OREGON



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## DECREE

### RENEWING THE OBLIGATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MASS ON SUNDAYS AND OTHER HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION

Having decreed, in response to the serious threat to public health posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, on the 12th and 16th of March 2020 and further on the 6th of April 2020, the suspension of public Masses and, ultimately, a dispensation from the obligation to participate in Mass on Sundays and other holy days of obligation (c. 1247), without failing to remind the faithful of the duty to keep holy the Sabbath;

And having already lifted the suspension of public Masses on the 4th of May 2020 and found that the safety protocols and precautions in place in our churches since then have been effective in preventing the spread of illness;

Now, observing that many reliable signs indicate that the most severe phase of the pandemic is concluding and considering that the Governor of Oregon issued executive order 21-15 on the 25th of June 2021 lifting all remaining public health restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, effective the 30th of June 2021;

And with gratitude to the Lord for guiding and accompanying His Church throughout this time of pandemic;

**I hereby revoke the dispensation from canon 1247, effective the 16th of July, 2021, the Memorial of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and, thereby, renew the obligation of the faithful to participate, in person, in the celebration of Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation beginning with the observance of the 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

In accord with Catechism of the Catholic Church (n. 2181) and the universal law of the Church (c. 1248 §2), all the usual factors which may excuse a member of the faithful from attending Mass on days of obligation remain in place. For example, those who are ordinarily excused might include: the sick, their caretakers, and anyone with serious health concerns or grave fear of illness which necessitates avoiding large public gatherings. Such persons, nonetheless, should “devote themselves to prayer for a suitable time” (c. 1248 §2).

In other cases, the faithful are reminded that, for a just cause, the pastor of a parish can dispense the faithful of the parish and anyone actually present in the parish from the obligation to participate in the Mass in individual cases or may commute the obligation to some other pious work (c. 1245).

All are bound to keep holy the Sabbath by abstaining “from those works and affairs which hinder the worship to be rendered to God, the joy proper to the Lord’s Day, or the suitable relaxation of mind and body” (c. 1247).

I order that this decree be made known to all the faithful through all the usual means of communication.

Given at the Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon on this 30th of June, 2021, the Memorial of the First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church, everything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Most Rev. Alexander K. Sample, J.C.L.  
Archbishop of Portland in Oregon

Sr. Veronica Schueler, F.S.E.  
Chancellor

