



Office of the Bishop

# Diocese of Brownsville

1910 University Boulevard • P.O. Box 2279  
Brownsville, Texas 78520  
Tel. (956) 542-2501 • Fax (956) 542-6751

March 8, 2022

To the People of God in the Diocese of Brownsville,

My dear brothers and sisters,

The obligation for Catholics to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is rooted in the Church's desire to manifest in all her members the ardent love that unites Christ our Savior to his very own Body. For we are his Body by the grace of Baptism, and in the Eucharistic Sacrifice we are given the life that sustains us as his members.

This love which is enacted, and in which we participate when we gather for the Eucharistic celebration, is our joining to Christ as he glorifies the Eternal Father by the gift of Himself. We are drawn into His offering to the Father. The Eucharist is also the source of our love for one another in Christ, and it equips us to put into practice his gift of persevering and generous love for the world.

The Eucharist is our food for the journey; it unites us to Christ the Lord, even as it moves us to love one another as Christ has loved us. Our care for the poor and the sick flows from this highest of Charities that comes to us from Christ Crucified and Risen. For indeed, the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the wellspring of life and love in the world.

For charity's sake during the height of the pandemic, I granted in the Diocese of Brownsville, a dispensation from the Sunday obligation to attend Mass in order to stem the spread of this highly contagious and life-threatening virus. The dispensation was a response to the gravity of the threat, unprecedented in our lifetimes, that the COVID virus caused.

As conditions have improved, more and more people have returned to the practice of participating in the Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. This is a sign of great hope, and of our awareness as Catholics that to be the charitable people the Lord calls us to be, we must, whenever possible, seek the Sacrament of Charity, Christ himself in the Eucharist.

With these things in mind, I will withdraw the general dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation effective Sunday, March 20, 2022, the third Sunday of Lent. This simply means that the normal obligations for Catholics apply. These obligations include participating in Sunday Mass and using good charitable judgment when approaching the sacred assembly.