



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII
DIOCESE OF HONOLULU
WITNESS TO JESUS

February 1, 2021

Dear People of God of the Diocese of Honolulu,

Peace be with you!

As we go through the pandemic, we are enjoying the lifting of some restrictions, even as we still need to observe others for the safety and health of our community. I had extended the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation through February 16, 2021. I wanted to reinstate the obligation beginning with Lent, but since we still need to maintain social distancing in our churches, **I am hereby extending the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday and Holy Day Mass through noon on Holy Thursday, April 1, 2021**, which marks the end of Lent. However, this time I am strongly urging that all who take the dispensation engage in some other form of prayer or worship as suggested below. While none of these can be the equivalent of attending Sunday Mass, they will serve to keep us connected to worship, especially during the penitential season of Lent.

As I said in my last communication regarding the issue of Mass attendance, I urge all who are able to attend Sunday Mass to do so. There is nothing that substitutes completely for our weekly encounter with the risen Lord Jesus in the Eucharist. **Nevertheless, if you cannot attend Sunday Mass, you are strongly encouraged to do one or more of the following:**

- Participate prayerfully in a live-streamed or televised Sunday Mass AND spend at least 15 minutes in meditation on the Scriptures, preferably those proclaimed at Mass. (These can be found at www.usccb.org/readings.)
- Attend, in person, a weekday Mass AND spend at least 15 minutes on Sunday reading and meditating on the Sacred Scriptures.
- Spend at least 30 minutes on Sunday prayerfully reading and meditating on the Sacred Scriptures.
- Pray at least two rosaries on Sunday, meditating on the Glorious Mysteries and one other set of Mysteries you choose (i.e. Joyful, Sorrowful, Luminous).

Note that anyone who is sick should not attend Mass and is not obliged to do so. The above alternative spiritual exercises are strongly urged for those who are physically able to fulfill them.

As we prepare for Lent, I also urge you to celebrate the sacrament of Penance. Consult with your parish for opportunities for communal Penance services or individual confessions. The gift of the Lord's mercy and healing is readily available to us in this beautiful sacrament. May you have a holy and renewing Lent as you prepare for the great celebration of the Paschal Mystery of the Death and Resurrection of the Lord!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Larry Silva
Bishop of Honolulu