



DIOCESE OF JEFFERSON CITY

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DECREE

Dispensing the Faithful from the Obligation to Attend Mass on December 9, 2024

This year, December 8th, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and a holy day of obligation, falls on the Second Sunday of Advent. When a Solemnity falls on a Sunday of Advent its observance is transferred to the following Monday (*Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year*, no. 5). The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has abrogated the precept to attend Mass on certain holy days of obligation when they fall on a Saturday or Monday, however the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is not among them, therefore the precept to attend Mass remains after the transfer to Monday.

Unfortunately, the 2024 *Ordo* (an official publication printed by ecclesiastical authority and containing a *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur*), as well as other liturgical calendars, listed December 9th as “NOT A HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION.” Due to this error, there is a grave possibility that some Catholics may choose not to attend Mass wrongly thinking there is no obligation. Some Catholic faithful may be scandalized by the lack of participation of other Catholics or may have a disturbed conscience having received conflicting information from official Catholic sources.

Furthermore, our diocese is rural with many of our parish priests serving multiple parishes. Since the offering of Vigil Masses will not be possible for the holy day this year, and with the canonical limitation of a priest celebrating no more than three Masses on a day of precept, the scheduling challenges only add to the difficulty imposed by this obligation.

To resolve these serious matters in accordance with CIC can. 87 §1, and at the unanimous recommendation of the Presbyteral Council, I hereby

DISPENSE

the Catholic faithful in the Diocese of Jefferson City from the precept to attend Mass on the transferred Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, 9 December 2024.

Furthermore, the obligation contained in CIC can. 534 §1 for pastors and administrators to celebrate Mass for the people (*missa pro populo*) on 9 December 2024 is likewise DISPENSED.

Nonetheless, I encourage all parish priests of the Diocese of Jefferson City to celebrate publicly at least one Mass on 9 December 2024 in honor of our national patroness under the title of the Immaculate Conception, even if Mass is not normally scheduled on Monday.

Given at the Chancery in Jefferson City on the 6th day of November in the year of Our Lord 2024.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Shawn McKnight", written above a horizontal line.

The Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight, S.T.D.
Bishop of Jefferson City

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Roodhouse", written above a horizontal line.

Mr. Benjamin H. Roodhouse, J.D., J.C.L.
Chancellor