

Dear Parishioners of Our Lady of the Mount and St. Katharine Drexel,

In a letter dated April 29, 2021, Archbishop Hartmayer has provided pastors and parish administrators with a new directive regarding the easing of the pandemic restrictions. Please note the bold print below:

On May 22, prior to the celebration of the Vigil of Pentecost, the general dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass will expire in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

However, please note that the following exceptions remain in place and that one does **not** have an obligation to attend Mass on Sunday or a holy day of obligation in the following circumstances:

1. You are ill or you have a health condition that would be significantly compromised if you were to contract a communicable illness (i.e., you have underlying conditions or are in a high-risk category). Please use the dispensation and do not attend Mass.
2. You are experiencing flu-like symptoms.
3. You have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or you have reason to think you might be asymptomatic of a contagious illness.
4. You care for the sick, homebound, or infirm.
5. You are pregnant.
6. You are 65 years of age or older (per the CDC's recommendation of high-risk individuals).
7. You cannot attend Mass through no fault of your own (e.g., no Mass is offered, you are infirm, your ride did not show up, the church was at capacity).
8. You have significant fear or anxiety of becoming ill by being at Mass.

These categories will be reviewed in due course and revised as needed.

Persons legitimately dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass are still to observe the Lord's Day by participating in a broadcast of the Sunday Mass (A Mass is broadcast every Sunday on the local Fox television affiliate in Chattanooga at 6:30) or by spending time in prayer or meditating on Scripture, either individually or as a family.

We cannot live without the Eucharist, the "source and summit of the Christian life," and the Church is not fully alive without its congregation. We cannot wait to welcome you back this Pentecost!

In Christ,
Fr. Mark Thomas