



ROBERT CARDINAL MCELROY
BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE APOSTOLIC SEE
ARCHBISHOP OF WASHINGTON

DECREE

Dispensation from Obligation to Attend Sunday Mass


Given the severity of the inclement weather that is expected in the Archdiocese of Washington and in the surrounding areas in the next few days, and to resolve any doubts and ease consciences with regard to the obligation of Roman Catholics to attend anticipated or Sunday Masses on 24 and 25 January 2026, I hereby DECREE that, in this extraordinary circumstance, all subjects of the Archbishop of Washington, no matter where they may be, and all other Roman Catholics actually present in the Archdiocese, are dispensed from the Sunday Mass obligation on these days (cf. cann. 87 §1; 91; 1247).

No one is required to make use of this dispensation. It is certainly preferable to attend Mass if it is possible to do so according to one's prudential judgment.

At the same time, the obligation remains to keep holy the Lord's day, in fulfillment of the Third Commandment, so those who do make use of this dispensation are encouraged to engage in group or individual prayer, the reading of Sacred Scripture, and acts of charity and Christian witness.

Given at the Archdiocese of Washington on the 23rd day of January in the year 2026.




+ Robert Cardinal McElroy
Archbishop of Washington