



July 20, 2023

Dear Monsignor or Father:

In 2023, Christmas Day falls on a Monday. To assist in planning reasonable Mass schedules for the preceding weekend, I direct the following:

1. Diocesan particular law allows the pastor himself to authorize the celebration of multiple Vigil Masses in the parish on Christmas Eve, in accord with the pastoral needs of the people. However, since parish priests have already celebrated Sunday Masses that morning, I am limiting the number of Christmas Vigil Masses (Masses beginning before 10:00pm) to two (2) in any parish or group of partnered parishes. No Vigil Mass is to begin prior to 4:00pm without my express, written permission or without an indult to celebrate Vigil Masses prior to 4:00pm.

The Christmas Eve Vigil Mass does not fulfill the Sunday Mass obligation this year, regardless of the time scheduled for the Vigil Mass.

2. I am authorizing up to three (3) Christmas Day Masses per parish or group of partnered parishes. These Masses include the Mass during the Night, Mass at Dawn and Mass during the Day celebrated at 10:00pm or later December 24th, and on December 25.
3. Because January 1, 2024, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, falls on a Monday, the precept (obligation) to attend Mass is abrogated.

It is my hope that this arrangement is beneficial both to you as parish priests and to the people of God whom you serve.

If you have any questions or circumstances needing special consideration, please direct them to Fr. Matthew Kujawinski at (814) 824-1270 or [mjkujawinski@eriercd.org](mailto:mjkujawinski@eriercd.org).

You and your parishes remain in my prayer.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+Lawrence T. Persico*

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL  
Bishop of Erie

