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ARCHDIOCESE ADDRESSES INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SUNDAY MASS OBLIGATION

Faithful should consider safety, act prudently, set aside time for prayer

A statement from the Archdiocese of St. Louis:

With this weekend's expected winter storms, many Faithful have wondered, will the Most Reverend Archbishop Mitchell Rozanski be offering a dispensation for Saturday vigil and Sunday Mass? The short answer is that this is not necessary, because Canon Law addresses what to do in the event that it is impossible or unsafe to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist.

According to Canon 1248 §2: "If participation in the eucharistic celebration becomes impossible because of the absence of a sacred minister or for another grave cause, it is strongly recommended that the faithful take part in a liturgy of the word if such a liturgy is celebrated in a parish church or other sacred place according to the prescripts of the diocesan bishop or that they devote themselves to prayer for a suitable time alone, as a family, or, as the occasion permits, in groups of families. [Emphasis added.]"

What does this mean for Catholics? Pay attention to weather reports, follow the guidance from local officials regarding travel and safety, and consider following along with a live-streamed Mass or engaging in prayer personally or with family, if travel is unsafe. Above all else, act prudently and make a conscious effort to set aside time for prayer and reflection with Christ.