



DIOCESE OF VICTORIA

Office of the Bishop

March 10, 2023

Dispensation from Lenten obligation to abstain from meat on St. Patrick's Day

Given the penitential nature of the season of Lent, the Bishops of the United States have preserved in our dioceses the tradition of abstinence from meat on each of the Fridays of Lent, “confident that no Catholic Christian will lightly hold himself excused from this penitential practice” (Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, November 18, 1966, no. 13).

The law of abstinence binds those Catholics who have completed the fourteenth year of their age (Code of Canon Law, can. 1252).

“During the Lenten season, certain feasts occur which the liturgy or local custom traditionally exempts from the Lenten spirit of penance. The observance of these will continue to be set by local diocesan regulations ...” (Pastoral Statement, no. J 6).

This year, the Memorial of Saint Patrick falls on Friday, March 17. It is well known that Saint Patrick's Day is a day of friendly social celebration for many American Catholics.

I, Bishop Brendan J. Cahill, decree that on Friday, March 17, 2023, all Catholics of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas, no matter where they may be, and all other Catholics present in the Diocese on that day, are, by my authority, dispensed from the obligation to abstain from meat (Code of Canon Law, can. 87 § 1).

While it is not required that anyone make use of this dispensation, those who do wish to make use of it are encouraged to do an extra act of charity or penance in exchange for eating meat on that day.

Most Reverend Brendan J. Cahill
Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas