



WILTON CARDINAL GREGORY
BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE APOSTOLIC SEE
ARCHBISHOP OF WASHINGTON

DECREE

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” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Statement, November 18, 1966, n. 13).

The law of abstinence binds those Catholics who have completed the fourteenth year of their age (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....” (Statement, n. 16).

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 convivial celebration for many American Catholics.

I therefore decree that on Friday, March 17, 2023, all Catholics of the Archdiocese of Washington, no matter where they may be, and all other Catholics actually present in the Archdiocese on that day, are, by my authority, dispensed from the obligation (can. 87 §1).

It is not required that anyone make use of this dispensation. Those who do wish to make use of it are encouraged to abstain from meat on some other day as part of their penitential practices during Lent.

Given this second day of February two thousand twenty-three in the Archdiocese of Washington.



✠ Wilton Cardinal Gregory,
Archbishop of Washington




Chancellor