

Dear St. John Paul II Parishioners,

Archbishop Naumann chose the weekend of June 5/6, 2021, The Solemnity of The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, to reinstate the obligation of the faithful to attend Mass. Beginning that weekend, all Catholics residing within the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas must return to observing the precept of the Church to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. Those who have serious underlying health concerns or compromised immunity are not bound by the obligation to attend Mass.

Is it a mortal sin to miss Mass on Sundays and Holy Days? It certainly could be. To be a mortal sin, one's actions must be of grave matter (missing Mass is grave matter), with full knowledge of the gravity (which you now have after reading this), and with full consent of the will. Mitigating circumstances could be an underlying health concern, compromised immunity, caring for a sick child or dependent adult, or the inability to drive oneself to Mass, etc.

Johnson County Local Health guidelines no longer require masks to be worn at Mass, though we certainly encourage those who choose to wear masks to continue doing so. We have maintained social distancing for one half of the parish hall at Divine Mercy while decreasing the distancing for the other half of the hall. These measures allow families to make choices for themselves regarding their health and comfort.

Whether one is obligated to attend Mass or is excused from the obligation as described above, we are nonetheless obliged to keep holy the Sabbath. The faithful who are unable to attend Mass should celebrate a liturgy of the Word in their home using the Sunday readings, refrain from unnecessary work and avoid unnecessary shopping, and should spend time in leisure, rest, and prayer with their families and loved ones.

If you have questions about the obligation to attend Mass, please don't hesitate to contact the parish office. May the Holy Spirit kindle in the hearts of all the faithful a burning desire to celebrate the Eucharistic Presence of our Lord Jesus in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Fr. Riley