



His Excellency  
STEVEN JOHN RAICA  
By the grace of God and the Apostolic See  
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama

**DECREE**  
**GRANTING A DISPENSATION FROM LENTEN FRIDAY ABSTINENCE**  
**AND COMMUTING IT TO ANOTHER PENANCE, SACRIFICE, OR PIOUS WORK**  
**FOR SAINT PATRICK'S DAY 2023**


During the Season of Lent, Fridays are days of abstinence, obligating all Catholics aged 14 and older to abstain from eating meat as a common sign and witness of penitence in the Catholic community. Those with more serious health conditions are not necessarily bound by this discipline although they are encouraged to follow it, if it is prudent to do so. Consult with your Pastor when there are doubts.


This year, Saint Patrick's Day, March 17, 2023, falls on a Lenten Friday. Although it only holds the rank of a liturgical memorial in most places, it is nevertheless celebrated in a culturally-significant way by many within the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama.

Having received requests from around the diocese for a dispensation from abstinence in order to commemorate the memorial of Saint Patrick according to the common Irish-American traditions, and having considered the matter and weighed it before the Lord, for the spiritual good of the faithful who desire to celebrate this feast, and in accordance with canons 87 and 1250-1252 of the *Code of Canon Law*, **I hereby grant a dispensation from the discipline of abstinence on Friday, March 17, 2023, to all Roman Catholics residing or visiting and present in the Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama.**

**Commutation:** Those who use this dispensation from Friday abstinence are to undertake another penance, sacrifice, or pious work of their choosing on Saint Patrick's Day itself or on the day before or after Saint Patrick's Day 2023, in solidarity with the entire Catholic community.

Given at the Diocesan Chancery in Birmingham on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February, the Memorial of Saint Josephine Bakhita, in the Year of the Lord 2023.

  
Most Reverend Steven J. Raica  
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama

  
Very Reverend Bryan W. Jerabek  
Chancellor and Judicial Vicar

