



**THE 2024 OBSERVANCE OF THE SOLEMNITY
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA**

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated on December 8th, is always a Holy Day of Obligation in the United States. When December 8th falls on a Sunday, the Second Sunday of Advent, its observance is transferred to Monday, December 9th, which is the case this year. This past October 2024, the Holy See clarified that *both* the observance of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and the obligation to assist at Holy Mass are transferred to Monday, December 9th.

Archbishop Nelson Perez, upon consultation on the matter and in accord with Canon 87 §1, dispenses from the obligation to assist at Holy Mass on Monday, December 9th, 2024. This dispensation is not to minimize the importance of this Solemnity in the life of the clergy and faithful. In fact, Mary, under this title, is the Patroness of the country. Rather, the Archbishop grants this dispensation due to the shortness of time to instruct on this change in observance, with the recognition that most calendars are in place without the possibility to properly observe the obligation and, most of all, to ease the consciences of the faithful.

The Archbishop encourages parishes, institutions and religious communities to observe the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception as fully as possible—scheduling the additional celebration of Holy Mass for the benefit and convenience of the faithful, as well as, encouraging those who will not be assisting at Holy Mass to pray the Holy Rosary or some other devotion in honor of the Blessed Mother. Schools in session on December 9th are encouraged to arrange for the celebration of Holy Mass. Pastors, especially, are asked to publish this notice about the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception in print and on social media.

Since this dispensation is not universal throughout the United States, it is important to note for the faithful that this is the pastoral decision of the Archbishop for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.