

# LITURGY UPDATE

## Liturgical Memos

### December 12:

#### Third Sunday of Advent

This year, the celebration of the Third Sunday of Advent takes precedence over the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Liturgical celebrations should use the prayers and readings for Sunday. However, devotional practices associated with the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, including the singing of the *Mañanitas*, may be scheduled, so long as the themes of the Third Sunday of Advent (joy in the forthcoming celebration of the Lord's Nativity) is maintained in these celebrations.

### December 20:

#### Reconciliation Monday

All parishes in the Archdiocese of New York will have priests available to hear confessions from 11am-1pm and from 6pm-8pm. Parishes may wish to schedule an [Advent Penance Service](#) on this day or during the days leading up to Reconciliation Monday.

### December 25:

#### Christmas Day

Evening Masses scheduled for Saturday, December 25 (Christmas Day) should use the liturgical texts for Christmas and not the Feast of the Holy Family.

### January 2:

#### Epiphany of the Lord

The Epiphany Announcement of the Day of Easter may be said or sung following the reading of the Gospel. The text and music for the Announcement may be found in Appendix 1 of the *Roman Missal*.



## Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

Amongst the many feasts of the liturgical year which honor Our Lady, the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, holds a special place. On this day, the Church commemorates the unique role played by Mary in the mystery of salvation and celebrates her divine maternity, by which the human race received Jesus, the Son of God and Author of Life.

This beloved celebration finds its origins in the early Christian community's response to the Roman feasting of Janus, the pagan god of beginnings and transitions. At the start of the new year, Romans would give honor to this god who had two faces and who looked in two directions: to the old year which was ending and to the new year to come. As was the custom on most pagan feast days, January 1 was marked by revelry and



overindulgence. The chaos that preoccupied society on this day was meant to mimic the origins of the universe, when the gods were thought to have created the ordered world out of the primordial confusion of stars and planets. In the early days of Christianity, followers of Jesus wanted nothing to do with these pagan displays of excess; in response, they counseled a different approach, recommending that Christians mark the beginning of the year with fasting and other penitential practices. Saint Augustine, for example, enjoined his flock to repudiate the prevailing culture, writing: “Let the pagans give new year's gifts; you should give alms. Let them sing boisterous songs: you should open your hearts to the word of God. Let them rush to the theater: you should rush to the church. Let them get drunk: you should fast.” This anti-pagan emphasis continued to characterize Christian New Year observances for many centuries, with liturgical books often ascribing the title *“Ad prohibendum ab idolis”* [For protection against idolatry] to prayers for January 1.

As one might expect, when faced with the decision of whether to feast or fast, many Christians were inclined to choose the former. And so, by the fifth century, the Church decided to try a new approach to its observance of January 1, redirecting the celebratory character of this day to a more noble end. Now, the first day of the year would be used to honor Mary under the title *theotokos*, or “God-bearer.” This change was generally accepted by the Christian community. However, by the eighth century, many new feasts dedicated to Mary, such as the Annunciation and Assumption, had also been added to the liturgical calendar, and the celebration of January 1 began to decline in importance.

In the thirteenth century, January 1 took on a new title: “The Circumcision of the Lord and the Octave of Christmas.” This day now marked the events immediately following the Lord’s birth, including his naming and circumcision. Later, in an effort to connect January 1 more closely to the Church’s celebration of the Lord’s Nativity, Pope Saint John XXIII renamed this day once again in 1960, entitling it simply, “The Octave of Christmas.”

During the reform of the liturgical calendar following the Second Vatican Council, the original focus of many Church feasts was restored. To that end, the liturgical texts assigned to January 1 returned to emphasizing the Motherhood of Mary. The prayers and readings for this day now present the events marked during the Christmas season through the eyes of Mary and invoke her intercession at the start of the new year.



In another recent development, Pope Saint Paul VI established January 1 as a World Day of Peace in 1967, stating at the time that the desire for peace is at the heart of the Church's devotion to Mary. Earlier this year, Pope Francis explained the connection between these two themes in this way:

The reassuring and comforting gaze of the Holy Virgin is an encouragement to ensure that this time, granted to us by the Lord, be spent on our human and spiritual growth, that it be a time in which hatred and division — and there are many of them — be resolved, that it be a time to feel more like brothers and sisters, a time to build and not to destroy, to take care of one another and of creation. A time to make things grow, a time of peace (Angelus Address for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, January 1, 2021).

In recognition of the importance of Our Lady's Motherhood in the life of the Church, January 1 is a Holy Day of Obligation in the United States, except when it falls on a Saturday or Monday. In 2022, January 1 is a Saturday, and Catholics are not obligated to attend Mass on this day. Even so, the celebration retains its status as a solemnity, and Masses on Friday evening should be celebrated using the vigil texts for the feast. Saturday evening, however, marks the beginning of the celebration of Epiphany, and evening Masses on January 1 should use the liturgical texts for the Epiphany of the Lord in 2022.

One last note concerning the liturgical commemoration of January 1: amongst its Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, the *Roman Missal* includes a Mass "For the Beginning of the Civil Year." Following the liturgical rule that Masses for various needs may not be celebrated on solemnities, the rubric which precedes the Mass for the Beginning of the Civil Year indicates that these prayers may *not* be used on January 1. They could, however, be used on other days close to the beginning of the civil year, or even in those countries and communities which mark the start of their calendars during other months of the year.



## *Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments Specifies Liturgical Observances for 2022*

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments recently issued a response to questions concerning the celebration of Mass and the Divine Office on several days in 2022. The Congregation's commentary included the following observations and indications:

- In 2022, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph (March 19) will fall on a Saturday, and the Third Sunday in Lent will be observed the following day. The Congregation stated that, in the evening of March 19, Vespers I and the Mass of the Sunday should be celebrated.
- On Friday, June 24, 2022, the Solemnities of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost) and the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (June 24) fall on the same date. Both celebrations hold the same rank on the Table of Liturgical Days, and liturgical law does not provide any guidance as to which feast should be celebrated on this Friday. In response, the Congregation has determined for the universal Church that the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart will be observed on Friday, June 24, and the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist will be transferred to the preceding Thursday, June 23. However, where Saint John the Baptist is the patron saint of a nation, diocese, city, or religious community, the order of the two celebrations is to be reversed, keeping the Nativity on June 24 and transferring Sacred Heart to June 23 instead. Since this exception does not apply to parish churches, those communities whose church's titular saint is Saint John the Baptist will celebrate their patronal solemnity on Thursday, June 23, in 2022.



## *Liturgical Preparation Aid for Seasons of Advent and Christmas*

The *Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions* has published its annual free resource for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. This preparation aid includes: the full text of the Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution, music suggestions, sample penances, calendar advisories for the seasons of Advent and Christmas, the text of the Christmas Proclamation (to be sung before the Mass at Midnight), and the text of the Proclamation of the date of Easter (to be sung before the Mass on Epiphany). This resource may be downloaded in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) from the Liturgy Office website and distributed freely

with the permission of the Confraternity for Christian Doctrine, the USCCB, and the International Commission on English in the Liturgy.

## *Revised Translations of Liturgical Texts*

The USCCB's Divine Worship Committee recently announced a number of updates concerning the forthcoming publication of several newly translated liturgical books. These include the following:

- A revised English translation of the *Rites for Ordination of Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons* has been approved by the USCCB and the Holy See and is [available for purchase at the USCCB Bookstore](#). The obligatory implementation date for the new texts was set for the First Sunday of Advent, 2021. It is hoped that this new translation will be in place for a number of years, considering that several translations of these rites have been published in recent decades.
- The USCCB approved a new translation of the *Order of Penance* at their June 2021 assembly, and this text has been sent to the Holy See for the requisite *confirmatio*. There are no significant changes made to the organization or content of the book, but the translation has been thoroughly revised. Of special note is a slight change to the formula for absolution, the details of which will be announced following the confirmation of the text by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments [CDWDS].
- The USCCB Secretariat recently completed revisions requested by the CDWDS to the USA Spanish version of the *Book of Blessings (Bendicional)* to conform to the arrangement of the English version of the text. These two texts have been sent to the Holy See and await confirmation.
- In November 2019, the bishops of the United States passed the revised English translation of the *editio typica* of the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*. At its November 2021 General Assembly, the bishops approved a special arrangement of this text and the *Ritual de Iniciación Cristiana de Adultos* so that the numbering will remain the same as the current USA edition. Additional changes found in the revised translation include the integration of texts which overlap with the *Roman Missal*, more specific terminology for those involved at various stages of the process (e.g., "catechumen" vs. "candidate for baptism"), and combined rites which make a clearer distinction between candidates and catechumens. These English and Spanish texts will now be sent to the Holy See for *confirmatio* and *recognitio*. It is expected that the new versions will be published and available to parishes by 2023. Relatedly, the US bishops also approved revised *National Statutes for the Catechumenate* in English and Spanish. These, too, must now receive approval by the CDWDS.
- At its November General Assembly, the USCCB voted to approve the inscription of Saint Teresa of Calcutta [Kolkata] in the particular calendar for the (arch)dioceses of the United States as an optional memorial on September 5. (This memorial already appeared on the particular calendar for the Archdiocese of New York.) As well, a revised ICEL translation of *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside Mass* for use in the (arch)dioceses of the United States was approved and will now be sent to the Holy See for *confirmatio*.



## *Updated Guidance on Copyright Compliance*

The USCCB's Divine Worship Committee has recently given updated guidance concerning the need to obtain permissions to use and transmit copyrighted texts, in addition to [that which is published on the USCCB website](#). Those items which are most likely to pertain to archdiocesan parishes are given here:

### **General Notes**

Excerpts from copyrighted liturgical texts must be reproduced exactly from the official text, including capitalization and punctuation, and sense lines must be preserved. An appropriate acknowledgment of these texts must always be printed either beneath the texts or with other acknowledgments. No permission is required for the live-streaming of Masses and the Divine Office via social media.

### **Projection of Texts**

Permission is not usually granted to project readings and liturgical texts on screens during the liturgy, bearing in mind that most church-goers spend much of their week looking at screens, and the liturgy is an opportunity to engage in the real-time action occurring in the sanctuary and nave. Nonetheless, the USCCB has given permission for the time being to allow for the projection of liturgical texts in the case of local restrictions on the use of hymnals and worship aids. Since these restrictions are no longer in place in the Archdiocese of New York, this temporary permission does not apply to archdiocesan parishes, and the use of projected texts is not currently permitted.

### **Worship Aids**

A written agreement is required to reproduce the readings and the Mass texts in worship aids and bulletins on a regular basis. In the case of worship aids for special occasions, such as weddings and funerals, no special permission is required to reproduce liturgical texts, provided these handouts are not published and sold for general use outside the occasion at hand.

### **Online Publication of Liturgical Texts**

Permission is not granted to post liturgical texts online in most cases. The posting of daily readings using the USCCB RSS feed is allowed, and websites may not restrict users from accessing these readings in any way. Permission is not granted to podcast or post videos of the Sunday or daily readings.

Permissions to reproduce excerpts from the *Lectionary for Mass* or the *New American Bible* are given by the USCCB, while other Mass texts are copyrighted by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL). Contact information for these bodies may be found at the [USCCB's "Permissions Policy" website](#).

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