

# Liturgical Year Calendar and Advisory



November 30, 2025–November 28, 2026

Diocese of Saint Cloud  
Office of Worship



# The New Liturgical Year:

## I. Principle Celebrations of the Liturgical Year from November 30, 2025 – November 28, 2026

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent .....	November 30, 2025
Ash Wednesday. ....	February 18, 2026
Easter Sunday of the Lord’s Resurrection... ..	April 5, 2026
Ascension of the Lord (Thursday). ....	May 14, 2026
Pentecost Sunday.....	May 24, 2026
The Most Holy Trinity. ....	May 31, 2026
The Most Holy Body & Blood of Christ. ....	June 7, 2026
First Sunday of Advent.....	November 29, 2026

## II. Cycles: Lectionary for Mass

Sunday Readings: Year A .....	November 30, 2025-November 22, 2026
Weekday Readings: Cycle II .....	January 12 to Feb. 17, 2026
.....	May 25 to November 28, 2026

## III. Cycles: Liturgy of the Hours

Volume I (Advent, Christmas.....	November 30, 2025-January 11, 2026
Volume III (Ordinary Time Weeks 1-6.....	January 12-Feb. 17, 2026
Volume II (Lent, Triduum, Easter).....	February 18-May 24, 2026
Volume III (Ordinary Time Weeks 8-17).....	May 25-Aug. 1, 2026
Volume IV (Ordinary Time Weeks 18-34)... ..	August 2-Nov. 28, 2026

The **Advent Season** has a two-fold character: as a season to prepare for Christmas when Christ's first coming to us is remembered; and as a season when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. Advent is thus a period of devout and joyful expectation.

*(General Norms of the Liturgical Year and Calendar #39)*



## IV. Liturgical Dates Throughout the Advent/Christmas Season

**Monday, December 8, 2025**

**Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Patronal Feast Day of the USA)**  
**Holy day of obligation**

**Friday, December 12, 2025**

**Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**

The date assigned in the liturgical calendar for this celebration is December 12<sup>th</sup>. The placement of her image in the liturgical space can call attention to this celebration. Intentions in the Universal Prayer may appropriately include themes reflecting concern for unity in the Americas and may conclude with the Collect customarily used for the Mass of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Processions in honor of Our Lady may take place as well. Many other local traditions, including the re-enactment of the story of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe may also take place.

**The Christmas Season** Next to the yearly celebration of the paschal mystery, the Church holds most sacred the memorial of Christ's birth and early manifestations. This is the purpose of the Christmas season.

*(General Norms of the Liturgical Year and Calendar #32)*

## Wednesday, December 24 & Thursday, December 25

### The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord [Christmas]

Texts for a Mass after 4:00 pm on Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, are properly chosen from the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (in the *Roman Missal, 3<sup>rd</sup> Typical Edition*) – the Vigil Mass. After an earlier “Vigil Mass,” the Mass texts will be from “At the Mass During the Night,” or, “At the Mass at Dawn,” or “At the Mass During the Day” - respectively. Assigned readings accompany each of these Masses in the Lectionary (however they do not reflect the new titles found in the *Roman Missal III*).

The crèche is to be displayed outside the sanctuary; it may be blessed at the Vigil Mass with the appropriate texts from the **Book of Blessings** (*BB Chapter 48*).

(2) “The Proclamation of the Birth of Christ” may be chanted or recited (from the Ambo by the deacon, cantor or reader) after the greeting and introduction of the Christmas Mass during the Night;

[For text and music see: Roman Missal, 3<sup>rd</sup> Typical Edition – “Appendix I: The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ” (from the Roman Martyrology), page 1450-1451 (USCCB edition)].

(3) Masses for the Vigil of Christmas may not be scheduled before 4:00 pm on Tuesday December 24<sup>th</sup>.



**Sunday, December 28, 2025**  
**Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus,  
Mary, and Joseph**

At Mass on this Feast, it is permissible for the priest-celebrant to make use of the Blessing of a Family found in the **Book of Blessings**, #62-67, making the necessary adaptations or additions as needed.

**December 28<sup>th</sup> closes the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope.**

The closing of the Jubilee Year will take place at St. Mary's Cathedral at 6:00 p.m..

**Thursday, January 1, 2026**  
**Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother  
of God (a holy day of obligation)**

On this day, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Mother of God.



**Monday January 5, 2021**

**January 4, 2026: Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord**

Some parishes honor the custom of blessing homes, offices and classrooms this day. **The Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers** book (the revised edition of 2008) provides a source for these blessings, as well as many other liturgical planning resources.

**NB:** On the Epiphany there is an ancient custom of announcing the dates of movable feasts for the coming year. This proclamation has been used in connection with the blessing and distribution of calendars. The \**“Announcement of Easter and the Moveable Feasts”* may take place at the ambo after the reading of the Gospel, or within or after the homily, by the deacon, the presider or some other minister.

[\*For text and music see: Roman Missal, 3<sup>rd</sup> Typical Edition – “Appendix I: The Announcement of Easter and the Moveable Feasts, page 1448-1449 (USCCB edition).”]

**Sunday, January 11, 2026**

**Feast of the Baptism of the Lord**

This feast is a “bridge” between the Christmas Season and Ordinary Time. It is the conclusion of the Christmas Season. As part of the liturgical celebrations consider the inclusion of a Sprinkling Rite to emphasize the baptismal imagery named throughout the liturgical prayers and Scripture.

## V. Liturgical and Diocesan Dates Throughout the Liturgical Year

**Sunday January 18 – Sunday, January 25, 2026**

### **The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

Begins on Sunday January 18, 2026, and ends on Sunday, January 25, 2026 (The Conversion of St. Paul). Check [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) for resources.

**Sunday, January 25, 2026**

### **Sunday of the Word of God**

Pope Francis declared that the Third Sunday of Ordinary Time is to be devoted to a celebration, study, and dissemination of the Word of God in his *motu proprio*, *Aperuit illis* (Sept. 30, 2019). Consider a blessing of parishioners' bibles; having a Book of Gospels enshrined in a fitting place; bless those who proclaim the Word of God in the parish.

**Sunday, February 22, 2026**

### **Rite of Election**

**St. Mary's Cathedral, 3:00 pm**

All catechumens who have completed a year-long OCIA process gather with Bishop Patrick Neary, C.S.C. to be named as the Elect to proceed to the Easter Sacraments at the Easter Vigil on April 4, 2026. Pre-registration is required through the Worship Office.

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026**

**Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord**

The recitation of the Creed is prescribed; the ministers and assembly genuflect at the words “by the power of the Holy Spirit ...” Alleluia may not be used for the Gospel acclamation since this feast day occurs during Lent.

**Thursday, March 26, 2026**

**Chrism Mass**

**St. Mary’s Cathedral, 7:00 pm**

The Diocese of Saint Cloud gathers with Bishop Patrick Neary, C.S.C to present the oil that is blessed and used throughout the diocese in the coming year. The holy oils are distributed to representatives of the parishes immediately following the Mass.

**Sunday, May 14, 2026**

**Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord**

In the Province of Minnesota this Solemnity is transferred to the Seventh Sunday of Easter and is to be celebrated according to the notations in the **ORDO**.

The Roman Missal provides a Vigil Mass for the Ascension of the Lord. The Paschal Candle should remain in place (near the ambo) and lit for all liturgies throughout Pentecost.

**Saturday, June 6, 2026**

**Ordination to the Diaconate**

**St. Mary’s Cathedral, 10:30 am**

**Saturday, August 15, 2026**  
**Solemnity of the**  
**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

This feast day is not a holy day of obligation this year.

**Monday, September 7, 2026**  
**Feast Day of St. Cloud**

The feast day is a solemnity for the parishes and institutions **in the city of St. Cloud.** For all other parishes in the diocese, it retains the rank of feast day.

**Sunday, November 1, 2026**  
**Solemnity of All Saints**

**Monday, November 2, 2026**  
**Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed**  
**(All Souls' Day)**

Any readings from no. 668 or from the Masses for the Dead (1011-1016).

**VI. Masses in Honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Outside Advent, Christmas time, Lent and Easter, on Saturdays which have no commemoration having the rank of Obligatory Memorial or higher, a “Mass in Honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary” may be selected from the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. The Liturgical Press (Collegeville, MN) has updated the two-volume edition (I: Missal; and II: Lectionary) to comply with the *Roman Missal III*.

## Liturgical and Pastoral Notes:

The **Book of Blessings**, particularly Chapters 47, 48 and 49, contain specific blessings and particular liturgical law with regard to the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

A custom re-introduced by Pope Benedict XVI is the “Blessing of the Images of the Infant Jesus” on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent. An adaptation from Chapter 35 of the **Book of Blessings** (“Order for the Blessing of an Image of our Lord Jesus Christ”) may be used.

The color for the Season of Advent is violet (purple). In order to distinguish between this season and the Season of Lent, a violet with bluer hues may be used. Any use of blue vestments is not authorized for use in the United States of America. Funeral Masses may choose to employ the use of violet vesture also (as given in #39 of the **Order of Christian Funerals**).

The color of the Season of Christmas is white. However, gold vesture may also be used in place of white.

“If the manger is set up in the Church, it must not be placed in the presbyterium. A place should be chosen that is suitable for prayer and devotion and is easily accessible to the faithful” (as prescribed in the **Book of Blessings**, #1544). This might be a good time for the parish Liturgy Committee, especially those in art and environment, to review the section in **Built of Living Stones** (“The Liturgical Year: Seasonal Decorations,” paragraphs 122-129/pages 43-44). Another helpful resource regarding Advent and Christmas art and environment is the updated version of: **To Crown the Year** [2<sup>nd</sup> Edition] by Peter Mazar [with revisions by Rev. J. Philip Horrigan], published by LTP, Chicago, IL (© by the Archdiocese of Chicago, 2015).

The reading of the Gospel at all Masses is to be proclaimed by a bishop, priest or deacon (cf: **GIRM**, #109). With the exception of the reading (or chanting) of the Lord's Passion on Passion/Palm Sunday and Good Friday (which contains several options employing the use of multiple readers and voices), it is not permitted to have the Gospel of the Nativity proclaimed with multiple readers and voices.

As referenced above, the Masses for Christmas follow the traditional sequence (with the assigned readings from the **Lectionary** and prayers from the **Roman Missal, 3<sup>rd</sup> Typical Edition**):

**The Nativity of the Lord**

**At the Vigil Mass**

**At the Mass During the Night**

**At the Mass at Dawn**

**At the Mass During the Day**

Please refer to the **ORDO** for pastoral notes regarding the use of readings and prayers for the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord.

Another very helpful resource (as referenced above) is: *2026 Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons, and Weekdays - The Almanac for Pastoral Liturgy*, LTP, Chicago, IL © Archdiocese of Chicago, 2025

**Resources:**

*The Lectionary for the Mass* (cf: "Introduction")

*The Roman Missal, 3<sup>rd</sup> Typical Edition* (cf: "GIRM")

The Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours & Celebration of the Eucharist  
2025 Ordo [Province of Minnesota]

*2026 Sourcebook for Sundays and Seasons* (An Almanac of Parish Liturgy) [LTP, Chicago, IL]

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)/Bishops' Committee on Divine Worship [Washington, DC] @ [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)

Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) [Washington, DC] @ [www.fdlc.org](http://www.fdlc.org)

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Is it permissible to celebrate a Funeral Mass on Sunday or a Holy Day?**

A: First, let us answer the question regarding funerals on Sundays. A Funeral Mass (as outlined in the *Order of Christian Funerals*) is allowed on most Sundays in “Ordinary Time” as prescribed by “The Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist.” Always consult the **ORDO** (notations R1, R2 and/or R3).

That being said, the scheduling of a Funeral Mass on Sunday should always be discouraged unless extremely serious pastoral needs necessitate making an exception to this liturgical and pastoral rule (and not simply for the sake of convenience).

Secondly, the celebration of a Funeral Mass is rarely (if ever) permitted on a Holy Day of Obligation because of the dignity and status afforded a “solemnity” on the Liturgical Calendar. Again, always consult the **ORDO** as some exceptions occasionally arise when the “Monday/Sunday Rule” is involved and the obligation to participate in the Holy Day Mass is abrogated.

**Q: What time can we celebrate this year's Easter Vigil?**

**A:** Holy Saturday is April 4, 2026. The **Roman Missal, Third Edition**, states: "The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil must take place during the night, so that it begins after nightfall and ends before daybreak on the Sunday" (The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night, pg. 343, no. 3). The *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Vigil* (issued by the Vatican in 1988) is even stronger by insisting that the Easter Vigil must start only after it is dark: "This rule is to be taken according to its strictest sense. Reprehensible are those abuses and practices which have crept into many places in violation of this ruling, whereby the Easter Vigil is celebrated at a time of day that is customary to celebrate anticipated Sunday Masses."

The Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (BCL) Newsletter (March 2001), states the Easter Vigil "is to take place in darkness ... that is, after the time in the evening when daylight is last visible." Nightfall begins when twilight ends, about 30 minutes after sunset.

All of these documents emphasize the need for the Easter Vigil to occur in darkness so that as the Light of Christ breaks the darkness, so too, Christ the Light transforms our lives. The Easter Vigil is not to be understood or celebrated as just another anticipated Sunday vigil Mass. Pastoral considerations may determine what time is best following sunset. Given that sunset on April 4, 2026 is at 7:48 pm in St. Cloud, the Easter Vigil in St. Cloud should not begin before 8:30 pm.



The Office of Worship serves as a resource to all the people in the diocese. Please feel free to contact the office for further information or clarifications at 320-255-9068.