



OREMUS

Journal of the Office of Worship
Roman Catholic Diocese of Oakland

Catholic Traditions for Advent and Christmas

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The Catholic Church has designated the four weeks preceding Christmas as Advent, a time to prepare the way of the Lord for His coming as our King and Savior. In addition, the Church teaches that:

[w]hen the Church celebrates *the liturgy of Advent* each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviors first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating [John the Baptists] birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: He must increase, but I must decrease (Catechism, no. 524; original emphasis).

By participating in various time-honored traditions, such as making Jesse trees or putting on a Christmas play at home, Catholic families can engage more fruitfully in the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Either we live the liturgical year with its varying seasons of joy and sorrow, work and rest, or we follow the pattern of the world, writes Helen McLoughlin in [Advent and Christmas in a Catholic Home](#), commenting on the challenge Catholics have of being in the world but not of the world throughout the year.

It seems fitting that Advent is the beginning of the liturgical calendar, for it is a season of spiritual preparation marked by an eager longing for the birth of Our Savior Jesus Christ. There are age-old Advent practices, some of which are mentioned in this FAITH FACT, which will help our children and families live closer to Christ.

The practices are time-tested and proven. They teach the doctrine of redemption and develop a sense of generosity toward God (cf. Catechism, nos. 2222-26). A family's strong and living faith will become their heritage and a mode to reinforce the religious practices centered in the liturgy.

The Church primarily celebrates Christmas from Christmas Day until the Solemnity of the Epiphany, which commemorates the manifestation of Christ as the Savior of the whole world (cf. Mt. 2:1-12). The Church has also traditionally celebrated Christmas for 40 days, culminating on the Feast of the Presentation (Feb. 2). During this time, the birth of Christ is celebrated as one continuous festival. It is just as important to celebrate during the Christmas season as it is to prepare for Christ during Advent.

Martin, Michaelann. *Catholic Traditions for Advent and Christmas*. Lay Witness (December 1998). Reprinted with permission.



Birth of Jesus Christ—traditional

PRAYING IN GOOD FAITH: TEN WAYS TO EXAMINE YOUR LITURGICAL CONSCIENCE

By CHRISTOPHER CARSTENS

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Guitar choir or Gregorian chant? Communion on the tongue or in the hand? Liturgical language that is elevated, formal, and Latinate – as in the present Roman Missal – or language more common, casual, and conversational – as in the former Sacramentary?

Opinions on liturgical matters such as these differ, as with myriad other liturgical elements: Is the Church better served by modern or traditional architecture? Should the Easter Vigil begin late for the sake of symbolic darkness or early to encourage better attendance? Ought Christmas poinsettias be real or manufactured from silk?

Parish liturgical committees debate such issues and render advice to their pastors. But on what grounds? To what degree does one's personal preference – whether one sits on the liturgy committee or in the pew – determine what is “good” or “bad” in the liturgy? Am I my own liturgical litmus?

Pope John Paul II once asked this same question: “The Liturgy! Everybody speaks about it, writes about it, and discusses the subject. It has been commented on, it has been praised, and it has been criticized. But who really knows the principles and norms by which it is to be put into practice? The Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* referred to the liturgy as the ‘source’ and the ‘summit’ of the Church’s life (no.10): what is being done to make this sublime definition a reality?”¹ Indeed: what are the standards by which the liturgy is celebrated and evaluated? Moreover, where are these measures to be found?

In his questions about liturgy cited above, John Paul II has revealed their answer: the Magisterium’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

In preparation for the Third Christian Millennium, as well as on the 40th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s liturgical constitution, Pope John Paul II spoke of an “examination of conscience” similar to one Catholics make prior to sacramental confession:² Before entering the confessional, I am called to examine my moral life – my thoughts and words, my commissions and omissions – according to the Ten Commandments, Christ’s two Great Commandments, the Word of God, and the teaching of the Church.

Along those same lines, a liturgical conscience – of an individual, a committee, a parish, or even the Church universal – is also formed and judged according to received norms. Some of these norms are divinely revealed while others are put forward by the Magisterium. But whether the subject is liturgy or morality, the temptation is the same, namely, to be our own rule – and ruler. But this autocratic urge is no more possible to realize than it is for an eye to see itself without the aid of a mirror. While a conscience is often described as an “interior voice,” one rising from deep within, a conscience is at the same time a voice from without, a law inscribed by God himself.³

Etymologically, “conscience” means “to know” (from the Latin *scio*) “with others” (*con*). In liturgical matters, this ‘other’ is the Church, and a well-formed liturgical conscience – as St. John Paul II suggests – is formed and examined according to the Church’s own liturgical principles. (*cont’d on page 6*)



The "O Antiphons" of Advent

The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century.

They are the antiphons that accompany the *Magnificat* canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23.

They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.

December 17

O Wisdom of our God Most High,
guiding creation with power and love:
come to teach us the path of knowledge!

December 18

O Leader of the House of Israel,
giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai:
come to rescue us with your mighty power!

December 19

O Root of Jesse's stem,
sign of God's love for all his people:
come to save us without delay!

December 20

O Key of David,
opening the gates of God's eternal
Kingdom:
come and free the prisoners
of darkness!

December 21

O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal light,
sun of justice:
come and shine on those
who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death.

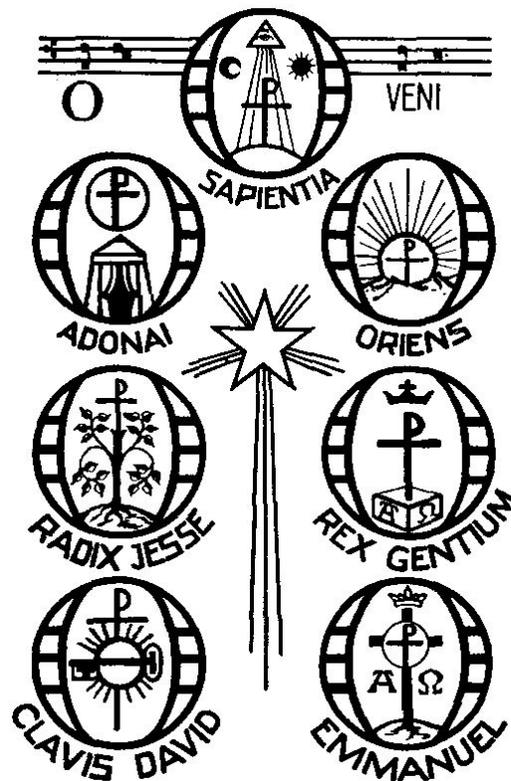
December 22

O King of all nations and
keystone of the Church:
come and save man, whom you
formed from the dust!

December 23

O Emmanuel,
our King and Giver of Law:
come to save us, Lord our God!

—From [Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers](#)



Excerpts from Pope Benedict XVI's Spiritual Thoughts Series: "Christmas"

These quotes and reflections from the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, are excerpted from "Christmas: Pope Benedict XVI Spiritual Thoughts Series."

"Presence"

Advent, this powerful liturgical season that we are beginning, invites us to pause in silence to understand a presence. It is an invitation to understand that the individual events of the day are hints that God is giving us, signs of the attention he has for each one of us.

---Homily at First Vespers of Advent, November 28, 2009

"Waiting"

The question is: Is the humanity of our time still waiting for a Savior? One has the feeling that many consider God as foreign to their own interests. Apparently, they do not need him. They live as though he did not exist and, worse still, as though he were an "obstacle" to remove in order to fulfill themselves. Even among believers – we are sure of it – some let themselves be attracted by enticing dreams and distracted by misleading doctrines that suggest deceptive shortcuts to happiness. Yet, despite its contradictions, worries and tragedies, and perhaps precisely because of them, humanity today seeks a path of renewal, of salvation, it seeks a Savior and awaits, sometimes unconsciously, the coming of the Savior who renews the world and our life, the coming of Christ, the one true Redeemer of man and of the whole of man.

---Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience December 20, 2006

"Preparation"

Christmas is a privileged opportunity to meditate on the meaning and value of our existence. The approach of this Solemnity helps us on the one hand to reflect on the drama of history in which people, injured by sin, are perennially in search of happiness and of a fulfilling sense of life and death; and on the other, it urges us to meditate on the merciful kindness of God who came to man to communicate to him directly the Truth that saves, and to enable him to partake in his friendship and his life. Therefore let us prepare ourselves for Christmas with humility and simplicity, making ourselves ready to receive as a gift the light, joy and peace that shine from this mystery.

---General Audience, December 17, 2008



"Sign"

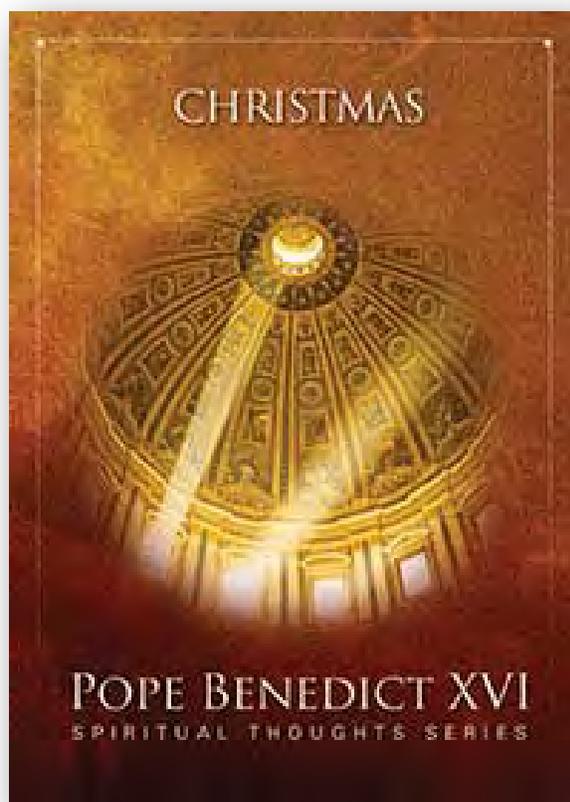
God's sign is his humility. God's sign is that he makes himself small; he becomes a child; he lets us touch him and he asks for our love. How we would prefer a different sign, an imposing, irresistible sign of God's power and greatness! But his sign summons us to faith and love, and thus it gives us hope: this is what God is like. He has power, he is Goodness itself. He invites us to become like him. Yes indeed, we become like God if we allow ourselves to be shaped by this sign; if we ourselves learn humility and hence true greatness; if we renounce violence and use only the weapons of truth and love.

---Homily at Mass for the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, December 24, 2009

"Changing"

Only if people change will the world change; and in order to change, people need the light that comes from God, the light which so unexpectedly [on the night of Christmas] entered into our night.

---Homily at Mass for the Solemnity, of the Nativity of the Lord, December 25, 2008



PRAYING IN GOOD FAITH: *(continued from page 2)*

What are the “principles and norms” – let’s call them commandments – of the liturgical life? The Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, when read in light of the Church’s tradition and understood according to her liturgical practice, gives the Church’s liturgy its direction. And while not exactly laid out as a litany of positive or negative proscriptions such as Moses received on Sinai, the Constitution’s contents might be distilled into a decalogue of liturgical formation and decision-making. (In fact, John Paul II himself performs such an examination of conscience concerning the Church’s liturgical and sacramental life in his 2003 Apostolic Letter *Spiritus et Sponsa*.)

10 Commandments of the Liturgy

Here, then, based on the Church’s own teaching, are 10 principles to form the liturgical conscience. Perhaps there are more; maybe there are fewer; undoubtedly the principles could be arranged or expressed differently – but knowing even this non-exhaustive list of liturgical truths will help us see the liturgy as the Church herself does.

1. The Liturgy Glorifies God and Sanctifies Humanity

The Constitution describes the liturgy as a work “wherein God is perfectly glorified and men are sanctified”. Here is the most basic, most fundamental, most essential liturgical norm. Is it also the most overlooked?

God’s glory and our salvation are “twin” goals since, as St. Irenaeus puts it, “the glory of God is man fully alive; moreover man’s life is the vision of God” (see Catechism of the Catholic Church, 294). To be a saint is the best way to glorify God; and to spend one’s life praising God is, as a consequence, to become a saint. These are the main purposes of the liturgy from its greatest source of power to its smallest detail: from the Eucharistic presence of Christ himself, to the cantor leading the congregation in song and prayer, to the doorknobs on the church’s front entrance.

2. The Liturgy Is the Work of Jesus

Jesus Christ is the liturgy’s Prime Minister and, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, its principal actor. “Christ is always present in his Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of his minister, but especially under the Eucharistic species..., in the sacraments..., in his word..., and when the Church prays and sings.... Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ” (7).

The liturgy is not about the priest, except as he acts in the person of Christ the Head. It is not about the skill of the lector, except as Jesus, the Word of God, is announced. It is not about me, except as I am being transformed into Christ.

3. The Liturgy Drives the Economy

“Economy,” in the truest sense of the word, means “the management of a household” (think of the home-economics class you may have had in high school, and you get the idea). The work of Father, Son, and Spirit (see Commandment 2, above) is the management of a household – of creation, of the Chosen People, and now of the Church – back to the Trinity and eternal beatitude.

The liturgy, while contextualized within the Divine Economy, is also the wind filling the sails of the Bark of Peter back to the “Pearly Port.” God the Father, says the Constitution, “when the fullness of time had come sent his Son... anointed by the Holy Spirit...to be the mediator between God and men. Just as Christ was sent by the Father, so also he sent the apostles to accomplish the work of salvation which they had proclaimed by means of sacrifice and sacraments...” (5-8). Does the building committee, for example, know that it navigates the construction of a church (“nave” comes from the Latin, *navis*, or ship) for such a voyage?



4. The Liturgy Works in Mixed Sacramental Media

St. Leo the Great left us an incisively laconic liturgical maxim, “What was visible in our Savior has passed over into his sacraments.” The same Jesus who fed, healed, comforted, forgave, and died among the people of the Promised Land, 2,000 year ago, is the same Jesus who nourishes, cures, and forgives today – but through the medium of sacramental signs and symbols.

“In the liturgy,” *Sacrosanctum Concilium* says, “the sanctification of the man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs” (7). All that we see, smell, taste, touch, and hear in the liturgy brings with it, in a sacramental way, Jesus. Thus it matters what a minister does with his hands; there is significance in a new Paschal Candle and last year’s used one; or whether a bell calls worshippers to Mass. Far from simple reminders or pointers, these elements are bearers, porters, and potential epiphanies of what was once “visible in our Savior.”

5. The Liturgy Demands Active Participation

When it came to addressing the sacred liturgy, what was the most important principle for the Council Fathers? “In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else” (14).

But active participation does not mean, as Pope Benedict once put it, “something external, entailing a need for general activity, as if as many people as possible, as often as possible, should be visibly engaged in action” (*The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 171). On the contrary, “active participation” calls the baptized to actualize their baptismal priesthood by offering, with the priest, Jesus, the “unblemished sacrificial Victim,” but also “their very selves, and so day by day to be brought, through the mediation of Christ, into unity with God and with each other, so that God may at last be all in all” (*GIRM*, 79). Is this how you would describe your activity at Mass?

6. The Liturgy Announces the Church

The Church is and does many things, but she is most visibly herself at the celebration of the liturgy, especially when the diocesan priest par excellence celebrates at his Mother Church. As the Constitution says, “All should hold in great esteem the liturgical life of the diocese centered around the bishop, especially in his cathedral church; they must be convinced that the pre-eminent manifestation of the Church consists in the full active participation of all God’s holy people in these liturgical celebrations, especially in the same Eucharist, in a single prayer, at one altar, at which there presides the bishop surrounded by his college of priests and by his ministers” (41; 2).

The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ, and as Jesus’ Paschal work most identified him, so now the Paschal Mystery celebrated in the Church’s sacraments most reveal her. Does your parish’s liturgical assembly reflect the Mystical Body of Christ? Do the ushers know they are Christ’s hands, the choir his voice, the priest his head, the assembly an extension of his flesh and bones in the world?

7. The Liturgy Expresses and Causes Unity

In the first paragraph of the Council’s first document – which happens, not by accident, to address the liturgy – the Fathers state four principal intentions, one of which is “to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ.” Union, even while allowing legitimate diversity, has always been a hallmark of the Latin Church – the only “self-governing” Church of the West, compared to the 21 Catholic Churches of the East. The first of the Constitution’s practical norms, in fact, is an expression of the Council’s – and the liturgy’s – desire for unity, when it says that no one, “even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority” (22).

Are your own “principal aims” like those of the Second Vatican Council: expressing and fostering unity within the parish and diocese? (*cont’d on page 8*)

8. The Liturgy Is a Foretaste of Heaven

The liturgy looks both forward and back. The worshipping Church remembers Christ and the events of salvation (the term here is “anamnesis”) with a memory powerful enough to make these events of the past present here and now. But she also looks above and ahead to that full consummation of the Victorious Christ’s work, drawing that work back down to today’s celebration.

“In the earthly liturgy,” says the Constitution, “we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, a minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle; we sing a hymn to the Lord’s glory with all the warriors of the heavenly army; venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them; we eagerly await the Savior, Our Lord Jesus Christ, until he, our life, shall appear and we too will appear with Him in glory” (8).

Is your parish’s worship “out of this world,” even while firmly rooted on the ground? Are you, your family, neighbors, and pastor aware that, more than an earthly social gathering, your liturgical assembly should be reaching into heaven even as heaven reaches into Sunday’s pews and aisles?

9. The Liturgy Is Radiantly Beautiful

Much hay has been made about the supposed conciliar pronouncement that all liturgical art and architecture are to be “characterized by a noble simplicity.” Even though the sale of beige paint may have increased by an unfortunate misreading of this statement, such “noble simplicity” is not a blank minimalism. In fact, “noble simplicity” doesn’t apply to art and architecture at all. Rather, as the Constitution puts it, bishops, “by the encouragement and favor they show to art which is truly sacred, should strive after noble beauty rather than mere sumptuous display” (124).

In a similar, yet distinct, section of the Constitution, the Council Fathers call for the rites, rather than art and architecture, to possess “noble simplicity.” Yet this too can mislead without a proper understanding of the principles involved. The Latin text describes the liturgical rites as “nobili simplicitate fulgeant.” The Latin *fulgeant* means “let them shine,” thus the rites ought to shine with a simplicity that makes their content—Jesus—known. The Latin noun derivative is *fulgor*, meaning a “flash of lightening.” The liturgy, it appears, ought to resemble the moment of Jesus’ transfiguration, communicating in a flash of brilliance Christ’s glory to his three apostles.

Are your own liturgical tastes illumined by divine radiance?

10. The Liturgy Sings the Word

Some enjoy music because of the tune, while others are drawn to the words. The Church is among the latter, principally because her Savior and Head is the Word. Her lungs filled with the breath of the Holy Spirit, she sings to and through the Word unto the glory of God the Father. She is, in the words of Pope Benedict, the true glossolalia, the “new tongue,” her music like “drunken” (that is, Spirited) “speech” (Word).

Hence, “as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 112). What the Fathers mean here—as evidenced in the musical legislation both before and after the Council—is that music is not an “extra,” but essential. The words of the rite are enhanced by the breath of the ministers and assembly.

How much of your liturgy is sung? Would you describe your parish’s liturgical music program as essential or as nice add-on?



A Liturgical Life to the Full

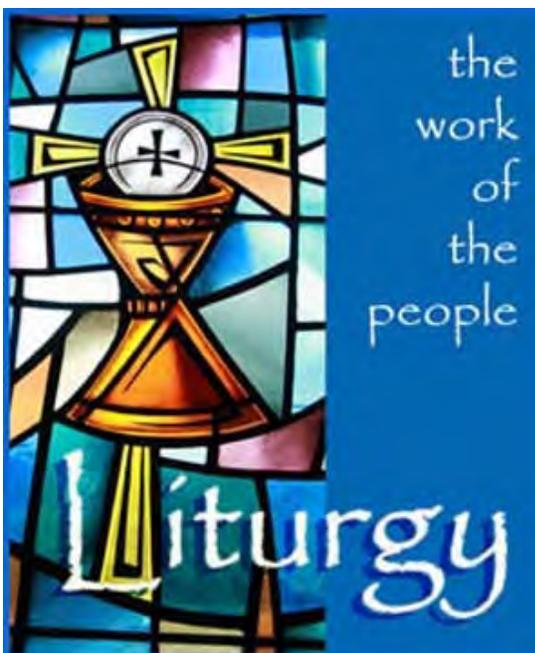
The above list, distilled from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, will not answer every liturgical conundrum or solve every liturgical dispute (whether these take place with another or within oneself). But these principles and norms do suggest a Magisterial framework for liturgical comprehension, participation, and celebration.

Take any real-time example from your own parish and measure it against the above-named principles. Do the Mass's servers at your parish, for instance, glorify God and help you become a saint? Are you singing a particular song in a certain manner, to take another example, so that Jesus himself might be heard (and not you)? Here's another point in question: are decisions about the altar's construction concerned with the finished product as a reflection of heaven? However we might respond to these problems, what we like or don't like, that is, our personal preference, has next to nothing to do with the right answer to these questions.

Like the Christian moral code, the laws of the liturgical cult cultivate a life to the full, a life in abundance, a life reaching from earth to heaven. The Constitution's norms are codified in the Church's rites, instructions, and rubrics. Far from restrictive, these create an environment for us to encounter Christ and, like the disciples at the transfiguration, soak up his radiance and grace.

Pope Benedict has named sanctity and beauty as the most convincing apologetic in today's world.⁴ While not the only place in Catholic life in which sanctity and beauty play a vital role, the liturgy (rightly celebrated and prayed) sanctifies and beautifies like nothing else. An informed liturgical conscience, like a well-formed moral conscience, is a key ingredient to such a liturgical life.

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Liturgical Notes on Advent & Christmas Time

From *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar*:

ADVENT

39. Advent has a twofold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight.

40. Advent begins with First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) of the Sunday that falls on or closest to November 30 and it ends before First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) of Christmas.

41. The Sundays of this time of year are named the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Sundays of Advent.

42. The weekdays from December 17 up to and including December 24 are ordered in a more direct way to preparing for the Nativity of the Lord.

The liturgical color for Advent is purple, just like Lent—as both are seasons that prepare us for great feast days. Also Advent (like Lent) includes an element of penance in the sense of preparing, quieting and disciplining our hearts for the full joy of Christmas. This penitential dimension is expressed through the color purple, but also through the restrained manner of decorating the church and altar: "During Advent the floral decoration of the altar should be marked by a moderation suited to the character of this time of year, without expressing in anticipation the full joy of the Nativity of the Lord...[also] the use of the organ and other musical instruments should be marked by a [similar] moderation..." (GIRM n. 305 and n. 313)

The third Sunday of Advent is called "*Gaudete*" Sunday (coming from the first word of the Latin Entrance Antiphon for this day, meaning "Rejoice") and the liturgical color may be rose instead of purple. This is the Church's way of further heightening our expectation as we draw ever nearer the Solemnity of Christmas.

CHRISTMAS

Above all on the day of Christmas, the Gloria should be sung and not recited.

The normal liturgical color for Christmas is white, but the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* also states in n. 346:

g) On more solemn days, festive, that is, more precious, sacred vestments may be used even if not of the color of the day.

h) The colors gold or silver may be worn on more solemn occasions in the Dioceses of the United States of America.

These liturgical colors draw the parallel between the liturgical Times of Christmas and Easter, the two most important Times around which the Church Year turns.

From *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar*:

32. After the annual celebration of the Paschal Mystery, the Church has no more ancient custom than celebrating the memorial of the Nativity of the Lord and of his first manifestations, and this takes place in Christmas Time.

33. Christmas Time runs from First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) of the Nativity of the Lord up to and including the Sunday after Epiphany or after January 6.

34. The Vigil Mass of the Nativity is used on the evening of December 24, either before or after First Vespers.



STATEMENT OF CLARIFICATION ON THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRISTMAS AND FULFILLING ONE'S MASS OBLIGATIONS FOR THE DIOCESE OF OAKLAND

This year, the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) falls on a Monday. The day before, Sunday, is the celebration of the Fourth Sunday of Advent. In order to reduce confusion and to bring some explanation, the following understanding of the Mass obligation is provided, and should in some form be disseminated to the faithful of the diocese.

Masses celebrated in the diocese for the Fourth Sunday of Advent should occur either as a lawful anticipated Mass on Saturday, December 23rd, or during the morning/day of Sunday, December 24th, using the Propers and Readings particular for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Normally-scheduled Sunday "evening" Masses (*for the Fourth Sunday of Advent*) are not to be celebrated as such this year.

Beginning on the evening (*before or after First Vespers/Evening Prayer I*) of Sunday, December 24th, and continuing throughout the day of Monday, December 25th, all Masses celebrated should be for the Nativity of the Lord, with the Propers and Readings particular for Christmas (*At the Vigil, during the Night, at Dawn, during the Day*).

For the Faithful and the obligation for attending Mass, it should be communicated that it is not lawful to fulfill multiple obligations from attending one single Mass. Therefore, going to Sunday Mass (either on Saturday evening or Sunday day) for the Fourth Sunday of Advent *will not* fulfill the holy day obligation for Christmas. Likewise, attending Sunday evening Mass (for the Vigil of Christmas) or Monday Christmas Mass *will not* fulfill the normal Sunday obligation for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. The faithful are therefore encouraged to attend one Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent and a second Mass for the Solemnity of Christmas.

Note that the law prescribes when *certain* Holy Days of Obligation (Jan 1, Aug 15, etc.) fall on a Monday, they are specifically mentioned and the Monday obligation is suspended for that year. Christmas is not ever mentioned as such, so the obligation remains, whether fulfilled on Christmas eve or Christmas day. That obligation would be separate from the normal Sunday obligation.

Accordingly, for this year the holy day obligation for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, on January 1 is not binding because it will fall on Monday (see Canon 1246 §2 USCCB).

To summarize, the obligation to attend Mass remains for **both** the fourth Sunday of Advent (fulfilled by attending a Saturday evening anticipated Mass or a Sunday Morning/day Mass) and the Solemnity of Christmas (fulfilled by attending either a Sunday evening Christmas Vigil mass or a Monday Christmas Mass). Also this year, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, falls on a Monday (Jan 1). However, since this is a holy day of obligation that can be abrogated if it falls on a Monday, the obligation is not in effect.

Trusting all to the providence and mercy of God, wishing you the blessings of a holy and happy holidays!

- Saturday December 2** Diocesan Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
Pilgrimage starts at 8:30 a.m. at St. Louis Bertrand Parish in Oakland, and concludes at the Cathedral with Mass, celebrated by Bishop Barber
- Sunday December 3** First Sunday of Advent
- Friday December 8** The Immaculate Conception (Solemnity)
Patronal Feast Day of the United States of America; Holy day of Obligation (USA)
- Tuesday December 12** Our Lady of Guadalupe (Feast)
- Monday December 25** The Nativity of the Lord (Solemnity) Holy day of Obligation
- Sunday December 31** Feast of the Holy Family
- Monday January 1, 2018** Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (Not a Holy day of Obligation in 2018)
- Sunday January 7** The Epiphany of the Lord (Solemnity)
*Festival Celebration at the Cathedral of Christ the Light
Epiphany Lessons And Carols at the Cathedral (5:30pm)*

Please visit the Office of Worship website <https://www.oakdiocese.org/ministries-pastoral/worship/worship> for more resources and information on Advent and Christmas.



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