

Topic: The Mass & Liturgical Year

IHM

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

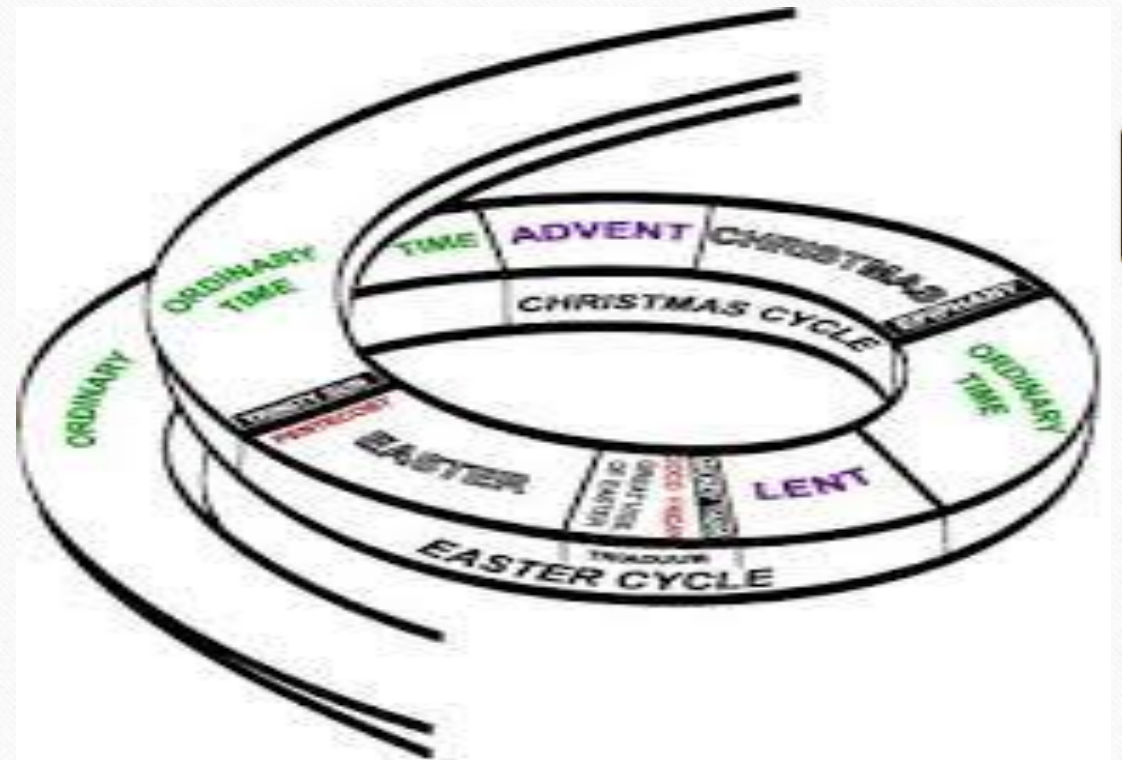
Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
Amen.

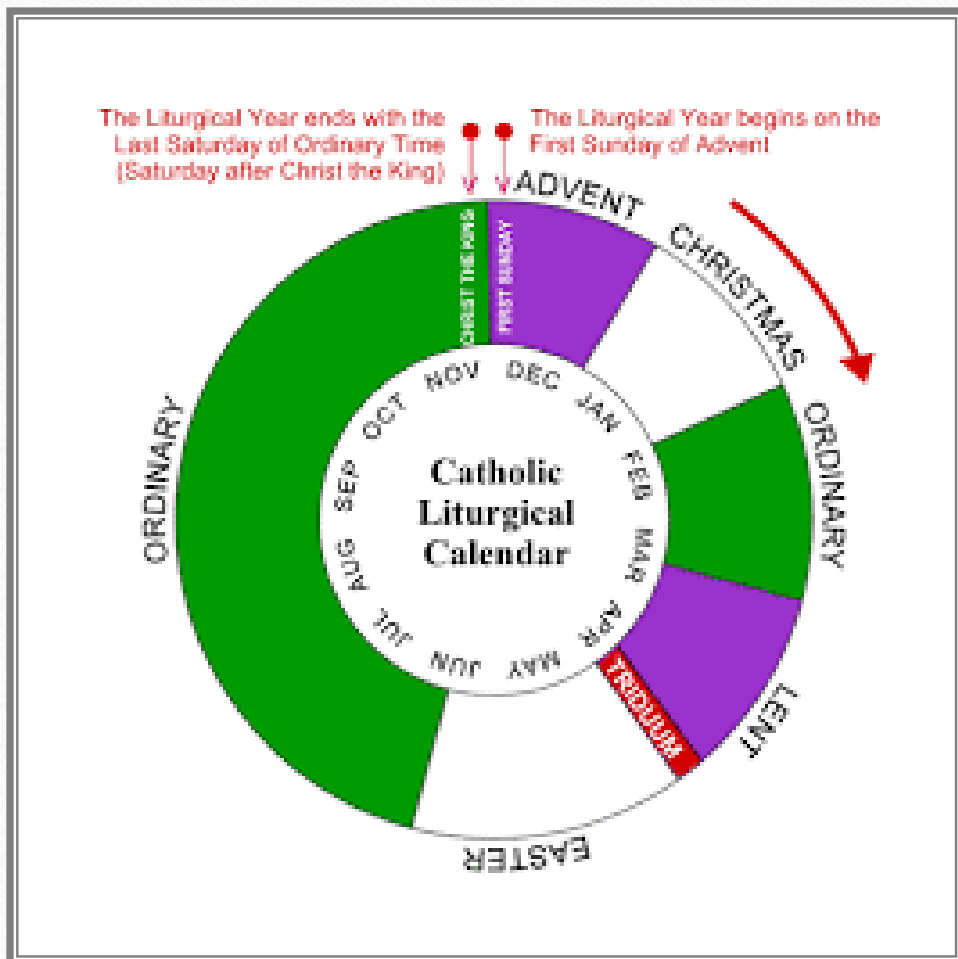
Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Liturgical Year

- The liturgical year cycles through different seasons similar to the natural year (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring, etc.).
- This parallels the life of Jesus Christ; the liturgical year is based upon the central mysteries of His life (Incarnation & Birth, Life & Teaching, Suffering & Death, Resurrection & Ascension, Pentecost & Discipleship, Incarnation & Birth, etc.)



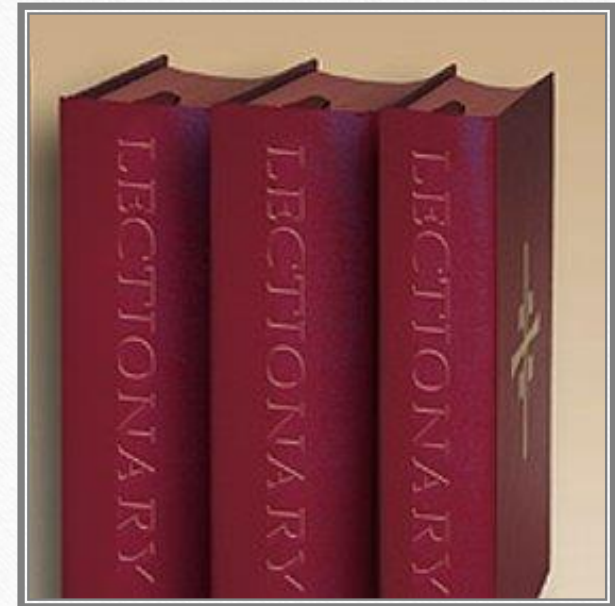
Seasons of the Liturgical Year



- Advent – preparation for the coming of Christ
- Christmas – celebration of Jesus’ Incarnation and birth
- Ordinary Time – recollection of Jesus’ public life
- Lent – Christ’s life culminating in His betrayal and crucifixion
- Easter – celebration of Christ’s Resurrection and Ascension, as well as the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
- Ordinary Time – period when we continue to learn about the path to holiness as witnessed by the life of Christ
- Feast Days – days throughout the year dedicated to Jesus, Mary, the saints, and angels

Readings of the Liturgical Year

- The readings at Mass reflect the liturgical year, for example we have:
 - Readings about the Nativity at Christmas
 - Readings on the Passion during Holy Week
 - Readings about the Christian life during Ordinary Time
- There are 3 yearly cycles to the readings; thus in three years the Church goes through nearly the entire Bible
 - Year A: Matthew
 - Year B: Mark
 - Year C: Luke
- On Sundays the first reading is from the Old Testament (and Acts) and is chosen because it corresponds to the Gospel reading

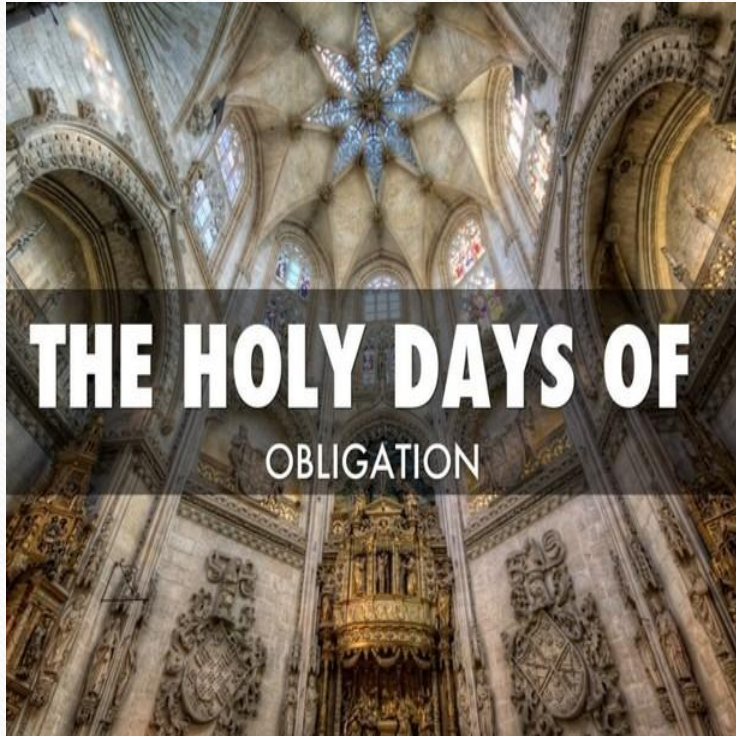


Liturgical Colors



	Green	Red	White /Gold	Purple	Rose
Meaning	Life, Hope, & Growth	Fire, Love, & Sacrifice	Purity & Joyful Festivity	Penance & Preparation	Joyful Anticipation
Use	Masses during Ordinary Time	Feasts of martyrs, apostles, Good Friday, Passion Sunday, and Pentecost	Masses during Christmas and Easter, and feasts of Jesus, Mary, and the saints	Masses during Advent and Lent, and Masses for the dead (Funeral Masses may also use white=joy)	Gaudete Sunday in Advent and Laetare Sunday in Lent

Holy Days of Obligation



- In addition to Sundays there are special feast days the solemnity of which obliges us to celebrate the Liturgy.
- The Church celebrates six holy days of obligation in the United States:
 - The Immaculate Conception – December 8
 - Christmas – December 25
 - Mary, Mother of God – January 1
 - The Ascension of Jesus – Forty days after Easter*
 - The Assumption of Mary – August 15
 - The Solemnity of All Saints – November 1
- *The bishops' conference may transfer this feast to the following Sunday.

The Mass

- The word “liturgy” comes from the Greek word *liturgia* which means “public work”
 - The liturgy is the Church’s official public worship
 - Through it Christ continues the work of Redemption
 - This is different from private worship like the rosary, novenas, prayers to the Sacred Heart, or prayers to the saints





Structure of the Mass

- 4 Part Structure:
 - Gathering, Storytelling, Meal sharing & Commissioning (Luke 24:13-35—the disciples on the Road to Emmaus)
- 2 Main Divisions:
 - Liturgy of the Word
 - Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Structure of the Mass

The Mass can be divided into two parts:

- **The Liturgy of the Word**

- Introductory Rites
 - Introit (Entrance Chant)
 - Greeting
- Penitential Rite
 - Confiteor
 - Kyrie
 - Gloria
 - Collect (Opening Prayer)
- Liturgy of the Word
 - First Reading
 - Psalm
 - Second Reading
 - Alleluia
 - Gospel Reading
 - Homily
 - Credo (Profession of Faith)
 - General Intercessions

- **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

- Preparation of the altar and gifts (Offertory Chant)
 - Prayer Over the Gifts
- The Eucharistic Prayer
 - Introductory Dialogue
 - Preface
 - Sanctus
 - Institution (Consecration)
 - Memorial Acclamation
 - Conclusion
- Communion Rite
 - Lord's Prayer
 - Sign of Peace
 - Fraction (Agnus Dei)
 - Holy Communion (Communion Chant)
 - Prayer After Communion
- Concluding Rite
 - Greeting, Blessing and Dismissal
 - [Final hymn]

Jesus' Actions at the Last Supper

- “These words also summarize [our lives] as [Christians] because, as [Christians, we are] called to become bread for the world: bread that is taken, blessed, broken, and given. Most importantly...they summarize [our] lives as... human beings because in every moment of [our lives] somewhere, somehow the taking, the blessing, the breaking, and the giving are happening.” (Henri Nouwen, *Life of the Beloved*)





Heart of the Mass--"Believe what you see, see what you believe and become what you are: the Body of Christ."

- “If you, therefore, are Christ’s body and members, it is your own mystery that is placed on the Lord’s table! It is your own mystery that you are receiving! You are saying ‘Amen’ to what you are: your response is a personal signature, affirming your faith. When you hear ‘The body of Christ’, you reply ‘Amen.’ Be a member of Christ’s body, then, so that your “Amen” may ring true!”
- — St. Augustine, Sermon 272

Discussion Questions

- Please share:

- What struck you from today's Mass readings?
- How might the Liturgical Year and its seasons help us to encounter God throughout our year, even in "ordinary" time?
- What aspects of Mass do you enjoy?
- What aspects do you still have questions about?
- What do you need to help move towards the "full and active participation" in the Mass that Vatican 2 called for?
- What questions did this topic and readings raise in your heart or mind?

Closing Prayer: The Circle of Life—Joyce Rupp

Dear seasons that pass over our fields
and through our hearts,
you are the word of God
spoken to us from the cathedral
of the great outdoors.
Stir up our love for life.
Fill us with joy and passion,
wisdom and stillness.

Reveal to us our own endurance,
patience, and ability to trust.
Lead us into reflection and solitude
as we move through the years
held in the arms of mystery.
Teach us to say “Yes”
to the unfolding work of the Creator
in our lives.
Amen.