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## *Liturgy Advisory for Advent and Christmas 2014*

### THE SEASON OF ADVENT

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. (Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year §39)

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. (Norms §40)

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. (Norms §42)

#### **The Sacrament of Penance during the Season of Advent**

During Advent the faithful should be encouraged to participate in the Sacrament of Penance in preparation for Christmas. ***The Rite of Penance*** provides examples for the use of Form 2 of this sacrament in communal celebrations. A penitential celebration should be scheduled during the season for the benefit of the faithful.

#### **Funerals during the Season of Advent**

Good liturgical practice would suggest reflecting the liturgical season in the choice of music and scripture. The Season of Advent may also reflect a change in the color of vesture and employ the option to use violet (OCF 39).

#### **Marriages during the Seasons of Advent and Christmas**

“Whenever marriage is celebrated during Mass, white vestments are worn and the wedding Mass is used. If the marriage is celebrated on a Sunday or solemnity, the Mass of the day is used with the nuptial blessing, and, where appropriate, the special final blessing...When the wedding Mass may not be used, one of the readings from the ritual should be chosen, except from Holy Thursday to Easter and on the feasts of Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, and other holydays of obligation. On the Sundays of the Christmas season and throughout the year, in Masses which are not parish Masses, the wedding Mass may be used without change. When a marriage is celebrated during Advent or Lent or other days of penance, the parish priest should advise the couple to take into consideration the special nature of these times.” (Rite of Marriage 11)

## November 2014

30 Sunday  
note: First Sunday of Advent (Year B – Weekdays I) violet  
*This Sunday is the beginning of the new liturgical year (2015)*

*During Advent, the playing of the organ and other musical instruments as well as the floral decoration of the altar should be marked with a moderation that reflects the character of this season, but does not anticipate the full joy of Christmas itself (Ceremonial of Bishops 236).*

*The use of the Advent wreath has become a popular practice in the Church. Chapter 47 of The Book of Blessings contains the Order for the Blessing of An Advent Wreath to be used on the First Sunday of Advent. The Advent Wreath should be large enough to be visible to the members of the assembly in a given church building. In some churches it is suspended from the ceiling. Others use a stand or a table for the wreath and candles. In any case, if the Advent Wreath is placed in or near the prebyterium (sanctuary) it should not be placed in such a way as to interfere with the ritual action or obscure the visibility of the altar, ambo or presider's chair. On the Second and subsequent Sundays of Advent, the candles are lighted either before Mass begins or immediately before the opening prayer with no additional rites or prayers.*

*The color of the Season of Advent is violet. In order to distinguish between this season and the season of Lent, the bluer hues of violet may be used. Blue vestments are not authorized for use in the United States. Rose colored vesture may be worn on the Third Sunday of Advent.*

*During Advent, the secular world focuses on decorating, shopping and rushing towards the celebration of Christmas, the Church gives us the Season of Advent as a way to practice discipline and patience in preparation for the great mystery of the Birth of Christ. Projecting, the celebration of Christmas onto a season that is to be marked by waiting and spiritual preparation seems to miss the point of Advent. Therefore, church environments should not reflect this kind of thinking and the integrity of Advent is to be kept without the addition of environmental elements indicative of the Christmas Season, i.e. Christmas trees, manger.*

## December 2014

3 Wednesday Memorial of Saint Francis Xavier, Priest white

6 Saturday Advent weekday violet  
Optional Memorial of Saint Nicholas, Bishop white



## THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

“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.” (Norms, §32) The Church begins its celebration of the Nativity of the Lord from First Vespers (Evening Prayer I) through the Baptism of the Lord, Sunday, 11 January 2015.

### December 2014

24 Wednesday  
*note:*

Vigil of the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord  
***Vigil masses may not begin earlier than 4:00PM EST.***

white

*Four Masses are assigned for the Solemnity of Christmas: a Vigil Mass, a Mass during the Night (historically referred to as the “Mass of the Angels”), a Mass at Dawn (historically referred to as the “Mass of the Shepherds”), and a Mass during the Day (historically referred to as the “Mass of the Incarnate Word”). These titles were given because of the proper Gospels assigned to each of the Masses. While the “ORDO” Order of Prayer for Liturgy of the Hours and the Celebration of the Eucharist contains a pastoral note stating that the readings of any of the Christmas Masses may be used according to the pastoral needs of each celebration, those preparing the Masses of Christmas should consider the richness of the mystery of the Incarnation as it unfolds in the proper sequence of readings for the four Masses of Christmas. For this reason it is laudible to use the proper readings for each Mass.*

*Although many traditions observe The Mass during the Night at midnight, it is not a requirement. It may be celebrated at a late evening hour before midnight.*

*The Gospel reading at any Mass is to be proclaimed by either a deacon or a priest. It is not permitted to have the Gospel proclaimed with multiple readers or voices with the exception of the Passion of the Lord which is proclaimed during Holy Week. (cf. GIRM #109).*

*In the Nicene Creed, at the word “and by the Holy Spirit...became man,” all genuflect at all Masses celebrating the Nativity of the Lord. (those who cannot genuflect may bow in the usual fashion).*

*The text of the “Christmas Proclamation”—The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ from the Roman Martyrology is found in Appendix I of the Roman Missal and may be chanted during the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours or before the celebration of Christmas Mass during the Night by a deacon or cantor from the ambo. The minister who chants the proclamation should be chosen based upon their ability to render the sung text well to the edification of the assembly (cf. Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, USCCB §23)*

*The color of the Season of Christmas is white. Gold vesture also may 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 (BB544) A Blessing for a Christmas Manger or Nativity Scene is found in Chapter 48 of the Book of Blessings.*

25	Thursday	Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord ( <i>Christmas</i> ) <b>Holy Day of Obligation</b>	white
26	Friday	Feast of Saint Stephen, the First Martyr	red
27	Saturday	Feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist	white
28	Sunday <i>note:</i>	Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph <i>At Mass, on the Feast of the Holy Family, a priest may wish to make use of the Blessing of a Family as found in the <u>Book of Blessings</u>, nos. 62-67, making the necessary adaptations or additions.</i>	white
31	Wednesday <i>note:</i>	Seventh Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord <i>Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God may not begin earlier than 4:00PM, EST (December 31<sup>st</sup>)</i>	white

## January 2015

1	Thursday  <i>note:</i>	The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God <b>Holy Day of Obligation</b> <i>Thursday, January 1—World Day of Prayer for Peace</i>	white
2	Friday	Memorial of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzan, Bishops and Doctors of the Church	white
3	Saturday	Christmas Weekday <i>[The Most Holy Name of Jesus]</i>	white/ <i>white</i>
4	Sunday <i>note:</i>	Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord <i>The Epiphany Proclamation may take place after the reading of the Gospel, or within or after the homily. It may be solemnly sung by the deacon or cantor from the ambo.* See the Roman Missal, Appendix I: The Announcment of Easter and the Moveable Feasts.</i>	white

*\*The minister who chants the proclamation should be chosen based by their ability to render the sung text well*

*to the edification of the assembly. (cf. Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, USCCB, § 23)*

*The Solemnity of the Epiphany is a traditional time when homes may be blessed. For the Blessing of Homes during this season see the Book of Blessings, nos. 1597-1621, and the Book of Household Blessings, nos. 89-91.*

5	Monday	Memorial of Saint John Neumann, Bishop (US)	white
6	Tuesday	Christmas Weekday <i>Optional Memorial of Saint Andre Bessette, Religious (US)</i>	white/ white
11	Sunday <i>note:</i>	Feast of the Baptism of the Lord <i>It is appropriate to replace the Penitential Act with the Rite for Blessing and Sprinkling of Water in order to highlight this feast. However, the Creed is not to be replaced with the Renewal of Baptismal Promises unless the Sacrament of Baptism or Confirmation is being celebrated at Mass. If Baptism or Confirmation is being celebrated the sprinkling of the assembly does not occur after the Renewal of Baptismal Promises as it does during the Easter Vigil and on Easter Sunday (US).</i>	white
	<i>note:</i>	<i>Last day of the Christmas Season and beginning of Winter Ordinary Time</i>	