



LITURGICAL NOTES

Upcoming Holy Days of Obligation

- Monday, December 8 * — Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Thursday, December 25 — Nativity of the Lord
- Thursday, January 1, 2015 — Mary, the Holy Mother of God

* Regarding Immaculate Conception: Evening Masses on Sunday, December 7 should be for the Second Sunday of Advent, since that celebration take liturgical precedence. But attendance at Mass that evening can still be applied to the Holy Day of Obligation, as long as one has already fulfilled the Sunday precept at an earlier Mass. The key point is that the two obligations must be fulfilled separately.

Evening Prayer II of the Second Sunday of Advent is prayed in the evening on Dec. 7.

Funeral Masses and ritual Masses are not permitted on December 8 or any Holy Day of Obligation. If there is a need to celebrate a funeral liturgy on this day, the “Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass” found in the *Order of Christian Funerals*, nos. 177-203, would be used.

Other Important Dates

- ♦ **Tuesday, December 9** marks this year’s observance of the anniversary of the dedication of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, and should be observed as a Feast outside the Cathedral, using option II in the Common of the Dedication of a Church.

- ♦ **January 22 - Mass in Thanksgiving for the Gift of Human Life**

January 22, 2015—the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*—should be observed as a “particular day of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life, and of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion”

(GIRM #373). The Roman Missal includes the “Mass for Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life,” which is found at no. 48/1 (with A & B options for the prayers) in “Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions.” White vestments are used.

- ♦ **January 23 - Optional Memorial of Saint Marianne Cope**

Last year, the Holy See confirmed the addition of St. Marianne Cope into the proper calendar for the Dioceses of the United States on January 23. Proper prayers for Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours were distributed previously and can still be found here: <http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/liturgical-calendar/saint-marianne-cope.cfm>. You may also request copies from the Office of Worship.

Christmas Notes

- ♦ **Genuflection at Christmas Masses** – At all Masses for the Nativity of the Lord, the assembly should be reminded beforehand to **genuflect during the Creed** at the mention of the Incarnation: “**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.**” Particularly on this day (and also on the Solemnity of the Annunciation), we pay homage to the great mystery of the Incarnation by symbolically touching ourselves to the ground, just as the Son of God came down among us as man.

Christmas Notes (continued)

- ♦ **Christmas Décor** – “Since the Christmas season begins with the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve and ends with the Baptism of the Lord, the placement and removal of Christmas decorations should coincide with these times” (*Built of Living Stones*, #125).

If a manger or crèche scene is set up in church, it should be not be placed in the main part of the sanctuary, but should be somewhere easily accessible for the prayer and devotion of the faithful (*Book of Blessings* #1544). The Nativity scene should only be blessed once each season (typically at the first Mass on Christmas Eve, or prior to it), though it could be revered with incense at subsequent Christmas liturgies.

- ♦ **The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ from the Roman Martyrology** – Located in Appendix I of the Roman Missal, it “may be chanted or recited, most appropriately during the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours. It may also be chanted or recited before the beginning of Christmas Mass during the Night.” This proclamation “may not replace any part of the [Christmas] Mass.” A recording of the chant is available at the bottom of this page: <http://www.npm.org/Chants/others.html>

- ♦ **The Announcement of Easter and the Moveable Feasts** – Also found in Appendix I, it may be proclaimed after the Gospel at the Mass during the Day for the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord (Jan. 6, 2013). A recording of the chant is also available on this page: <http://www.npm.org/Chants/others.html>

- ♦ **Blessing of Homes** – The Christmas season—and especially Epiphany—is a traditional time when homes are blessed. Parishes could promote the pious Epiphany custom of families using chalk to mark the year and the initials of the Magi (which also form a Latin abbreviation for “May Christ bless this house”) above the doors of their homes: **20+C+B+M+15**. This could be done in conjunction with a home blessing provided online by the USCCB: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/sacramentals-blessings/objects/blessing-of-the-home-and-household-on-epiphany.cfm>

Used Altar Cloths

The Poor Sisters of Saint Clare in Fort Wayne have asked that any stained or worn linen altar cloths that are no longer usable be sent to them for reverent re-use. If any parish would be interested in doing this, please contact Terry Broberg-Swagin at 260-399-1401.

Looking Ahead to Early 2015

Rite of Election/Call to Continuing Conversion:

South Bend: Sunday, February 15, 2:00 PM—St. Matthew Co-Cathedral

Fort Wayne: Sunday, March 1, 2:00 PM—Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Chrism Masses:

South Bend: Monday, March 30, 7:30 PM—St. Matthew Co-Cathedral

Fort Wayne: Tuesday, March 31, 7:30 PM—Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Easter Vigil, 2015

Easter Vigil Time: On Saturday, April 4, 2015, the end of civil twilight occurs at 8:37 PM EDT on the Fort Wayne side, and 8:42 PM EDT on the South Bend side. Therefore, around 8:40 PM would be the earliest appropriate time to begin the Vigil throughout the Diocese.

The Roman Missal states that the Vigil must begin in true darkness, “after nightfall.” The USCCB even encourages waiting an extra 15-30 minutes after civil twilight ends, if possible.