

The Advent and the Christmas Seasons

From the *Ceremonial of Bishops*:

- 234 Next to the yearly celebration of the paschal mystery, the Church holds most sacred the commemoration of Christ's birth and first manifestations. This is the purpose of the Christmas season.
- 235 The season of Advent, the preparation for this commemoration, has a twofold character: it is a time to prepare for Christmas, when Christ's First Coming is remembered; it is a time when that remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's Second Coming in the last days. In this way Advent is a period of devout and joyful expectation.
- 236 During Advent, the playing of the organ and other musical instruments as well as the floral decoration of the altar should be marked by a moderation that reflects the character of this season, but does not anticipate the full joy of Christmas itself.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, called Gaudete Sunday, rose vestments may be worn.

- 239 In keeping with a very ancient Roman practice, Mass maybe celebrated three times on Christmas, provided each is celebrated at its proper time, that is, at midnight, at dawn, and during the day.
- 240 The ancient solemnity of the Epiphany ranks among the principal festivals of the whole liturgical year, since it celebrates in the child born of Mary the manifestation of the one who is the Son of God, the Messiah of the Jewish people, and a light to the nations.
Whether the feast is observed as a day of precept or is transferred to the following Sunday, this solemnity is to be celebrated in a proper manner:
--there will be a suitable and increased display of lights
--after the singing of the Gospel reading, depending on local custom, a deacon or another minister will go to the lectern and there announce to the people the moveable feasts of the current year
--the custom of having a special presentation of gifts will be observed or renewed in accordance with local usage and tradition
--the invitations, comments and homily will explain the full meaning of this day with its "three mysteries": the adoration of the child by the Magi, the Baptism of Christ and the wedding at Cana.

Liturgical Environments for the Advent and the Christmas Seasons

Part 1: The King Shall Come when Morning Dawns: From Ordinary Time to Advent

The November Feasts: Eschatology and Harvest

** great images of Baptism fulfilled

Declining daylight and promise of new light

** promise of Paschal Mystery

Progression of November:

** All Saints/Souls to Christ the King

Autumn (late) Ordinary Time has a feeling/movement that is different than the other parts of Ordinary Time.

Advent *begins with Evening Prayer* on the Vigil of the First Sunday of Advent. (Luminaria) Advent ends with Morning Prayer or Eucharist on December 24 (which ever comes last!).

5 Celebrations of Obligation
Opportunity for Reconciliation

Advent has a two-fold purpose and movement: eschatology and history.
The environment of Advent should also have a two-fold movement.

The Advent Feasts prepare us for Incarnation:
at their center is the giving of gifts.

Advent marks time:

**giving of calendars

**progression of increased light

**symbol needs to be clear and simple

**the wreath was a “home” symbol that came to church

Liturgical Environment involves color, contrast, lighting, movement, music, and silence. Advent has a sound and feel all of its own it is different from Christmas. *Flowers and instruments in moderation!*

Special attention needs to be placed upon The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe. (Not just an ordinary Marian feast, but an Advent feast!

Part 2: When do we put up to the Manger? The days of the “O” Antiphons

December 13-23
Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 24

Antiphons: From the Office and Gospel Acclamation of the Day

- O Wisdom
- O Sacred (Saving) Lord
- O Flower of Jesse’s Stem (Tree)
- O Key of David
- O Radiant Light
- O King of All Nations
- O Emmanuel (God-with-us)

Function dictates form:

- Blessing of *Bambini*
- Blessing of Straw for home mangers
- Nativity displays
- Sacramental Celebrations to follow
- Location of Nativity
- Las Posadas or other ethnic celebrations
- Daily Mass

Christmas and Epiphany are only outranked by the days of the Easter Triduum: this should influence our “decorating” the shadow of the Cross is to be seen in the manger!

Outside the Church:

- **lights, tree and nativity!
- Luminaria for Christmas Eve
- **only works because of special schedule of Masses!
- The Vigil Mass of Christmas!

Psyche of Church goes!
Requisites for Solemn Celebration of Mass

Vessels and Vesture ARE an environmental issue!

Part 3: When is it time to put the Manger away? From Christmas to Ordinary Time

5 celebrations of Obligation

The Christmas Feasts: Incarnation and Manifestation

** images of God manifested in human form and activity

**Psyche of Church goes post-Mother of God

Increasing daylight and promise of rebirth (springtime)

**Carnival and days of Feasting

** preparation for Lenten Fast and celebration of the Paschal Mystery

Progression of Octave of Christmas and January

** Christmas to Baptism (and the Second Sunday of Ordinary Time in C Cycle of Sunday Readings)

**threefold manifestation of Christ (to shepherds, to magi, to the world) and 3 mysteries (Magi, Jordan and Cana)

**Winter Ordinary Time has a feeling/movement that is different than the other parts of Ordinary Time (to Presentation to Ash Wednesday).

Epiphany: More candles!

Font and Nativity

5 Sundays of Ordinary time before Lent in 2010 (Second to Sixth)

February 17 begins the Paschal Fast with Ash Wednesday

January 22: Day of Fasting in the United States

The Season of Advent

Cycle A Scriptures

The First Sunday

First Reading:

Isaiah 2: 1-5

The Lord will gather all nations together. The Lord's house shall be established as the highest mountain. The weapons of war shall be changed into tools for justice and productivity.

Second Reading:

Romans 13: 11-14

The time has come, the night is far spent, the day of the Lord draws near.

Gospel:

Matthew 24: 37-44

The rapture: keep a watchful eye and be ready, for one will be taken and the other left behind!

The Second Sunday

First Reading:

Isaiah 11: 1-10

A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse and justice will flourish in the land.

Second Reading:

Romans 15: 4-9

A prayer of blessing for all who believe, for Christ is the hope of all.

Gospel:

Matthew 3: 1-12

A herald's voice in the desert is heard. John the Baptizer proclaims that all which is not fruitful will be struck down.

The Third Sunday

First Reading:

Isaiah 35: 1-6, 10

The desert and the parched land will exult and bloom. The blind will see, the deaf will hear and the lame shall dance.

Second Reading:

James 5: 7-10

Steady your hearts and be patient, for the Lord is close at hand.

Gospel:

Matthew 11: 2-11

The Baptizer in prison asks, "Are you the One who is to come?"

The Fourth Sunday

First Reading:

Isaiah 7: 10-14

The virgin shall be with child, and bear a son. He shall be called Emmanuel.

Second Reading:

Romans 1: 1-7

Jesus, the descendant of David, is the One promised by all the prophets.

Gospel:

Matthew 1: 18-24

The Angel reassures Joseph to have no fear about taking Mary as his wife. The child is Emmanuel, a name which means 'God is with us'.

Immaculate Conception

First Reading:

Genesis 3: 9-15, 20

The fall from paradise.

Second Reading:

Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11-12

God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world.

Gospel:

Luke 1: 26-38

The account of the Annunciation.

The Season of Advent

Cycle B Scriptures

The First Sunday

First Reading:

Isaiah 63: 16b-17, 19b, 64: 2-7
O that the Lord would rend the heaven
and come down! He is our Father and
redeemer forever!

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians 1:3-9
We await the revelation of our Lord Jesus
Christ ... he will keep us firm until the
end!

Gospel:

Mark 13: 33-37
Be watchful and alert! You do not know
the hour of the return of the owner of the
house!

The Third Sunday

First Reading:

Isaiah 61: 1-2a, 10-11
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because
he has anointed me! He has clothed us in
a robe of salvation and a mantle of justice!
Bride and bridegroom shall meet!

Second Reading:

Thessalonians 5: 16-24
Rejoice always and pray without ceasing.
Do not quench the Spirit and retain what
is good..

Gospel:

John 1: 6-8, 19-28
The Baptizer proclaims that he is not
Elijah or the Christ, but rather the "the
voice crying out in the wilderness."

The Second Sunday

First Reading:

Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9-11
Comfort my people. Speak tenderly to
Jerusalem ... tell her that her guilt is
expiated! Like a shepherd he feed his
flock, gathering the lambs in his arm
leading them safely home!

Second Reading:

2 Peter 3: 8-14
One day for the Lord is like a thousand
years and a thousand years like a day! Be
patient!

Gospel:

Mark 1:1-18
A heralds voice in the desert is heard.
John the Baptizer proclaims a baptism of
repentance. One is coming!.

The Fourth Sunday

First Reading:

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16
The Lord shall establish a house for ever
and the Kindom of David shall endure for
ever..

Second Reading:

Romans 16: 25-27
The mystery kept hidden for long ages is
now manifested in Christ Jesus.

Gospel:

Luke 1: 26-38
The account of the Annunciation in which
Mary surrenders herself as the "handmaid
of the Lord."

Immaculate Conception

First Reading:

Genesis 3: 9-15, 20

The fall from paradise.

Second Reading:

Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11-12

God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world.

Gospel:

Luke 1: 26-38

The account of the Annunciation.

The Season of Advent

Cycle C Scriptures

The First Sunday

First Reading:

Jeremiah 33: 14-16

The Lord will raise a "just shoot" who shall do what is right and just. Those who belong to the Lord shall dwell secure.

Second Reading:

Thessalonians 3: 12-4: 2

A prayer of blessing is offered for God's people: When the Lord comes he will strengthen our hearts making us blameless and holy.

Gospel:

Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36

Be on guard! Your redemption is near at hand. There will be signs so keep watch.

The Third Sunday

First Reading:

Zephaniah 3: 14-18

The Lord will exult you and renew you in his love. Shout for joy! Sing before the Lord!

Second Reading:

Philippians 4: 4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always for the Lord is always near.

Gospel:

Luke 3: 10-18

The Baptizer reminds the crowd that one who is mightier will come, he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and in fire.

The Second Sunday

First Reading:

Baruch 5: 1-9

Rise up Jerusalem: take of your robe of mourning for the Lord will wrap you in his splendor!

Second Reading:

Philippians 1: 4-6, 8-11

A prayer of blessing that God may bring to completion the saving work that has begun in us in Christ Jesus.

Gospel:

Luke 3: 4-6

A herald's voice in the desert is heard. John the Baptizer tells us to make ready for all shall see the salvation of our God.

The Fourth Sunday

First Reading:

Micah 5: 1-4

From the smallest of the clans, Bethlehem-Ephrathah shall come the one who will be shepherd the flock.

Second Reading:

Hebrews 10: 5-10

The Lord will come to establish the new covenant, that all may be sanctified in Christ Jesus.

Gospel:

Luke 1: 39-45

The visitation of Mary and Elizabeth in which the greeting proclaims the presence of the Lord.

Immaculate Conception

First Reading:

Genesis 3: 9-15, 20

The fall from paradise.

Second Reading:

Ephesians 1: 3-6, 11-12

God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world.

Gospel:

Luke 1: 26-38

The account of the Annunciation.

Christmas Day Scriptural Readings (A,B,C)

Vigil Mass

First Reading:

Isaiah 62: 1-5

No longer are you forsaken or desolate, for you are My delight and your land espoused.

Second Reading:

Acts 13: 16-17, 22-25

Paul testifies that Christ is the Son of David.

Gospel:

Matthew 1: 1-25

The Genealogy from Abraham to Joseph through the line of David. The Angel reassures Joseph to have no fear. The child is Emmanuel, "God with us".

Mass at Midnight

First Reading:

Isaiah 9: 1-6

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light: for a child is born unto you, a son is given you.

Second Reading:

Titus 2: 11-14

The grace of God has been revealed to all people.

Gospel:

Luke 2: 1-14

The account of the Nativity with the shepherds and the angels.

Mass at Dawn

First Reading:

Isaiah 62: 11-12

The savior comes: you shall be called holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.

Second Reading:

Titus 3: 4-7

God's kindness and love has been lavished upon us in Jesus Christ our savior.

Gospel:

Luke 2: 15-20

The shepherds found Mary, Joseph and the baby in the manger, just as they had been told by the angels.

Mass during the Day

First Reading:

Isaiah 52: 5-7

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of peace. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation by our God.

Second Reading:

Hebrews 1: 1-6

God speaks to us through his Son.

Gospel:

John 1: 1-18

In the beginning was the Word; the Word has been made flesh and dwells among us.

The Christmas Season Scriptural Readings (A,B,C)

Holy Family

First Reading:

Sirach 3: 2-6, 12-14

The role of parent in the household.

Second Reading:

Colossians 3: 12-21

We are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved and are called to witness to love, patience, mercy and forgiveness.

Gospel:

A: Matthew 2: 13-15, 19-23

The flight into Egypt.

B: Luke 2: 22-40

The presentation at the temple. Anna and Simeon give glory to God for having fulfilled His promise.

C: Luke 2: 41-52

The search for and the finding of the child Jesus in the temple.

Mary, Mother of God

First Reading:

Numbers 6: 22-27

The blessing of Aaron.

Second Reading:

Galatians 4: 4-7

At the appointed time, God sent his own son to be born of a woman. We are now adopted children who call upon God as Abba.

Gospel:

Luke 2: 16-20

The circumcision and naming of Jesus.

Epiphany

First Reading:

Isaiah 60: 1-5

Rise up in splendor, the glory of the Lord shines upon you.

Second Reading:

Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6

In Christ Jesus, the Jews and the Gentiles are co-heirs in the promise of salvation.

Gospel:

Matthew 2: 1-12

The story of King Herod and the astrologers visit.

Baptism of the Lord

First Reading:

Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7

Here is my servant, my chosen one, in whom I am well pleased.

Second Reading:

Acts 10: 34-38

Paul accounts to Cornelius that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power.

Gospel:

A. Matthew 3: 13-17

The Baptism of Jesus.

B. Mark 1: 7-11

The Baptism of Jesus.

C. Luke 3: 15-16, 21-22

The Baptism of Jesus.