



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO  
OFFICE OF WORSHIP

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## **HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION – 2017**

The following solemnities will be observed as Holy Days of Obligation in 2017:

- January 1: **Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God** (Sunday)
- August 15: **Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary** (Tuesday)
- November 1: **Solemnity of All Saints** (Wednesday)
- December 8: **The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary** (Friday)
- December 25: **The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)** (Monday)

Since no Sunday falls between December 25, 2016 (Nativity of the Lord/Christmas) and January 1, 2017 (Mary, the Holy Mother of God), the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph falls on Friday, December 30, which is assigned as its proper date (*Universal Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, 35). It is perhaps redundant to say that January 1, 2017 is a Holy Day of Obligation since every Sunday is the primordial feast day (UNLYC, 4), on January 1 of 2017, the Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God is celebrated.

The Ascension of the Lord is observed on Sunday, May 28, 2017 for our Metropolitan Province as approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Congregation for Bishops.

### **SPECIAL DAYS OF PRAYER**

The following dates have been designated as Special Days of Prayer for the Archdiocese of San Francisco. These are not days of obligation to attend Mass:

- **September 4: Day of Prayer for Human Rights and Labor** (*Labor Day*)
- **November 23: Day of Prayer for the Fruits of the Earth** (*Thanksgiving Day*)

The faithful of the Archdiocese are asked to observe these Special Days of Prayer in their devotions or other private prayer, in the General Intercessions of the Mass and through the selection of other liturgically proper prayers for the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours.

- **January 23: A Day of Prayer and Penance for Life**

In all the dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 or January 23 (when the 22<sup>nd</sup> is a Sunday as in 2017), is observed as a particular day of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life. The Mass "For Peace and Justice" (no. 22 of the "Masses for Various Needs") should be celebrated with violet vestments as an appropriate liturgical observance for this day. (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 373)

- **January 1**, in addition to being a Holy Day of Obligation to celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, is designated as a **Day of Prayer for World Peace**.

- **March 5**, the First Sunday of Lent, is also designated as a **Day of Prayer for the General Needs of Humankind**.

## HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION

The following brief description of Holy Days of Obligation in the dioceses of the United States of America is designed to provide some clarification. (*Excerpted and adapted from the NCCB Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy Newsletter, Volume XXXII, Sept. 1997.*)

- January 1 (**Mary, the Mother of God**), August 15 (**The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**), and November 1 (**All Saints**) are days of obligation only when they fall on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or Sunday.
- The **Ascension** is observed on the Seventh Sunday of Easter for our Metropolitan Province as approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Congregation for Bishops.
- December 8 (**Immaculate Conception**) is always a day of obligation, except in years when December 8 falls on Sunday and the solemnity is observed on December 9.
- December 25 (**The Nativity of the Lord/Christmas**) is always a day of obligation.

## WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS ON SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES

**GIRM #372:** Ritual Masses are connected to the celebration of certain Sacraments or Sacramentals. They are **prohibited on Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter, on solemnities, on the days within the Octave of Easter, on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day), on Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week**, taking due account of the norms given in the ritual books or in the Masses themselves.

**GIRM #374:** In cases of serious need or pastoral advantage, at the direction of the diocesan Bishop or with his permission, an appropriate Mass may be celebrated on any day **except solemnities, the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter, days within the Octave of Easter, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day), Ash Wednesday, and Holy Week.**

**GIRM #380:** Among the Masses for the Dead, the Funeral Mass holds first place. It may be celebrated on any day **except for solemnities that are holy days of obligation, Holy Thursday, the Easter Triduum, and the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter**, with due regard also for all the other requirements of the norm of the law.

*#34 of the second edition of the Ordo Celebrandi Matrimonium* provides that when marriage is celebrated within Mass, the ritual Mass ("Wedding Mass") is used with white vestments or those of a festive color. (Unofficial translation): "But on the days listed in nos. 1-4 of the table of liturgical days [cf. *General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*], the Mass of the day is used with its proper readings; the nuptial blessing is given during the Mass and, as circumstances suggest, the proper formulary of the solemn blessing is used. During the season of Christmas and in Ordinary Time, when a marriage is celebrated within Sunday Mass in which the parish community participates, the Mass of the Sunday is used.

"The liturgy of the word designed for the celebration of marriage has great impact on catechesis about the sacrament itself and about inculcating marital duties. When the ritual Mass for Marriage, ("Wedding Mass") is not used, one of the readings may be taken from the texts provided for the celebration of marriage."

**TIMES OF FEASTS:**

Some liturgical days call for the celebration to be held at a certain time. The following is a brief summary of dates which have a time-specific nature to the celebration and should be used when planning your liturgies:

**THURSDAY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:** The rubrics call for the celebration to be held "in the evening." There is no specific definition for "evening" in the GIRM or calendar of days; however, most definitions show that "evening" usually starts at, or following, sunset.

**FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD:** The *Missal* states that the liturgy is to occur "on the afternoon of this day, about three o'clock." Allowance is given that for pastoral reasons "a later hour" can be chosen. So 3:00 p.m. or later would be appropriate.

**THE EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT:** The Revised *Roman Missal* states: "The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil must take place during the night, so that it begins after nightfall and ends before daybreak on the Sunday." Nightfall can be determined by various calculations, and it changes from year to year as the date of Easter changes. The Office of Worship will send out a memo at the beginning of the calendar year when the Archbishop has approved the earliest starting time for the Easter Vigil.