



FROM THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP

NOTES FOR JULY/AUGUST 2024

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Saints in July—Saint Mary Magdalene; Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus

While they may not be holy days of obligation, there is one Feast and one Memorial in July that deserve some special attention:

July 22—Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene

In 2016, the Memorial of Saint Mary Magdalene was raised to a proper Feast. As with any Feast, the *Gloria* is sung at Mass, and the readings for the feast day take the place of the Ordinary Time readings. A proper Preface was approved for use in 2019, and is available on the “Worship” area of the diocesan website.

In the Office of Readings of the Liturgy of the Hours, the psalmody, verse, and First Reading with its Responsory are taken from the Common of Holy Women instead of the usual day; the *Te Deum* is also sung or said after the Second Reading with its Responsory. Funerals may be celebrated this day if needed.

July 29—Memorial of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus

On January 26, 2021, Pope Francis ordered the inscription of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus into the General Roman Calendar as an obligatory Memorial, to replace the existing celebration of Saint Martha alone. The proper liturgical texts were released by the Holy See in Latin. While some of the existing texts have remained the same, others have been adjusted slightly or included for the first time. Interim liturgical guidelines for the celebration of Sts. Martha, Mary and Lazarus are available on the “Worship” area of the diocesan website. As with any Memorial, funerals may still be celebrated this day.

Assumption of the BVM—Holy Day of Obligation or Not?

Q. Is the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary a holy day of obligation this year?

A. August 15 lands on a Thursday in 2024. This means that the Assumption is a holy day of obligation. Only when it lands on a Saturday or a Monday is the obligation lifted. Do not forget to remind your congregations the weekends leading up to August 15 that it is a day of obligation.

Assumption is also one of the few days that does have proper prayers and readings for a vigil Mass the evening of August 14. Masses celebrated after 4 PM on August 14 would use the vigil Mass prayers and readings. And like any other holy day of obligation, funeral Masses are not celebrated this day. For the Liturgy of the Hours, Evening Prayer I of the Assumption is prayed on Monday evening.

OCIA, RICA, & National Statutes Timelines

As announced in the last issue of *Notes*, the English and Spanish editions of the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults* (OCIA) and *Ritual de la Iniciación cristiana de adultos* (RICA) were confirmed by the Holy See on February 14, 2024. After review by the Secretariat of Divine Worship, a timeline for implementation was approved.

The revised OCIA/RICA may first be used on the First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2024, and the mandatory implementation date has been set for Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025.

In addition, the Dicastery for Bishops also confirmed the *National Statutes for the Christian Initiation of Adults*, which will replace the 1988 *National Statutes for the Catechumenate* as particular law for the dioceses of the United States regarding the Initiation process.

The 1988 *National Statutes for the Catechumenate* contained 37 paragraphs and included not only particular law for the United States but also norms contained in the ritual text or the universal law. By removing norms that were either repetitive or found in other parts of the law, the new Statutes now contain only eighteen Norms. The implementation date for the revised Statutes is the First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2024. The statutes will be printed in ritual and study editions of the new OCIA, and a Spanish translation will appear in the revised RICA.

The Office of Worship and the Office of Catechesis will be working to help parishes implement these revised rituals. Look for more information coming this fall, including how to order the ritual texts at reduced cost.

Beginning the School Year in Prayer

Perhaps more than any other time, as the beginning of this school year approaches, it is right to look at starting with prayer. Here are a few suggestions from the resources of the Church:

- ✠ *Book of Blessings*—Chapter 5 provides an “Order for the Blessing of Students and Teachers,” which may be done both in and out of Mass. This could be done for the entire school or even by individual classes.
- ✠ *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*—Part V: Prayers for Catholic Living provides some simple prayers to start and end the school year, as well as a “Prayer for Students” and a “Prayer for Teachers.” There is also a simple “Blessing Before an Athletic Event” that may be helpful for coaches or parent volunteers.
- ✠ Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit—In many places it is customary to invoke the intercession of the Holy Spirit on the start of the academic year by celebrating a Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, or “Red Mass,” on a weekday that allows for a Votive Mass to be celebrated (check your *ordo*). Proper prayers for the Mass can be found in the *Missal* under Votive Masses, #9, The Holy Spirit; and readings can be found in the *Lectionary* at #1001.

September 1—World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

In 2015, [Pope Francis](#) called for an annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation every September 1, marking the beginning of the “Season of Creation,” which lasts through the Feast Day of Saint Francis of Assisi on October 4. The theme for this year is “Hope and Act with Creation.” Pope Francis’ message for 2024 along with other resources can be found at the [Care of Creation website](#).

In addition, the USCCB has a [collection of resources](#) to help parishes and institutions celebrate this day dedicated to the care of God’s creation.

Locally, the Office of Worship provides a [booklet](#) in connection with the annual Rogation Mass with “Prayers for Soil and Seed and Those Who Work the Land.” Let us all take care of God’s creation!

2024 World Day of Prayer for Grandparents and the Elderly

In 2021, Pope Francis established the celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on the fourth Sunday of July, near the liturgical memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus (July 26). The [theme for the 2024 celebration](#) selected by the pope is “Do not cast me off in my old age” (Psalm 71:9).

The U.S. bishops have approved the transfer of the celebration of World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly in the U.S. to the first weekend after Labor Day (September 8) to coincide with National Grandparents (and the Elderly) Day in the United States as many local communities, schools, and parishes have celebrated for some time. For more information and resources on how to celebrate this day, please visit the [USCCB World Day for Grandparents and Elderly page](#), as well as the [Dicastery for Laity and Family Life](#) site.

Liturgies for Labor Day

We give thanks to God for the gift of work, and we ask that he “give success to the work of our hands” (Psalm 90:17). Since there is no other feast day on September 2 that would take precedent, parishes may wish to consider celebrating Masses on Labor Day using the following texts:

- ✦ *Roman Missal*: Masses and Prayer for Various Needs and Occasions, II. For Civil Needs, #26 A or B, For the Sanctification of Human Labor
- ✦ *Lectionary*: #907-911, For the Blessing of Human Labor

Catechetical Sunday 2024

This year, the Church will celebrate Catechetical Sunday on September 15, with the theme *Lord, when did we see you hungry?*. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each person plays, by virtue of Baptism, in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Those who the parish community has designated to serve as catechists may be called forth to be blessed for their ministry.

As in past years, a variety of materials have been prepared to assist clergy, parish catechists, Catholic school teachers, and the faithful to celebrate Catechetical Sunday. These can be found at the [USCCB Catechetical Sunday 2024](#) website. In addition, chapter four of the *Book of Blessings* provides an “Order for the Blessing of Those Appointed as Catechists” that may be used in or outside of Mass. This could be used at the Masses Catechetical Sunday weekend to publicly recognize those who have made the commitment to serve as catechists, as well as giving the faithful of the community the opportunity to publicly pray for and support those entrusted with this great work.

Lastly, please do not forget to recognize parents as the first teachers of children. The role which they play is essential, and our prayerful support of them is greatly needed and appreciated.

All Saints/All Souls in 2024

This year, the Solemnity of All Saints (November 1) lands on a Friday. This means that **it is a holy day of obligation in 2024**. Masses the evening of Thursday, October 31, would be anticipatory Masses for All Saints (since there are not specific prayers/readings for a vigil for All Saints). The ordo also recommends the exposing of relics this day for veneration by the faithful, placing them in some location of honor this day (but not on the altar itself).

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All Saints/All Souls in 2024 (cont.)

As usual, November 2 brings us the Commemoration of All Souls. Since it holds the special title of “commemoration,” it has its own set of rules:

- ✘ Priests are granted the privilege of celebrating three Masses—one for a particular intention, one for all the faithful departed, and one for the intentions of the Holy Father.
- ✘ Funeral Masses may be celebrated this day, but other ritual Masses may not.
- ✘ Masses the evening of November 1 would still be for All Saints and not anticipating All Souls.
- ✘ Masses the evening of November 2 would be anticipatory Masses for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Chapter 57 of the *Book of Blessings* provides an “Order for Visiting a Cemetery on All Souls Day” that can be used right after Mass or apart from the Mass. Remember to pray for the dead!

Christmas Creep 2024 & Mary Mother of God 2025

“Christmas Creep” for 2024—December 25 will land on a Wednesday this year. While the liturgical calendar is less crowded than it was last year with Christmas on a Monday, here are a few things to keep in mind in preparing:

- ✘ The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord begins after 4 PM on Tuesday, December 24. Masses after 4 PM would be for the Vigil of the Nativity.
- ✘ December 25 is always a holy day of obligation. Please remind your people in the weeks leading up to Christmas 2024 of that fact.
- ✘ Mass intentions—As is the case with any holy day of obligation, one of the Masses for Christmas must be said *pro populo* (“for the people”).

In 2025 January 1, the Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God, is a Wednesday, so it will be a holy day of obligation. Masses the evening of December 31 would be anticipatory Masses for the Solemnity. The Diocese of Evansville is under the patronage of Mary, Mother of God—pray for the local Church this day!

Vigil Mass vs. Anticipatory Mass

Q. What is the difference between a “vigil Mass” and an “anticipatory Mass?”

A. They look a lot alike, and the terms are often used interchangeably. However, in Church calendar terms, a “vigil Mass” is a Mass the evening before (after 4 PM) a Solemnity with its own proper prayers and/or readings that are distinct from the ones for the actual feast day. The easiest examples of this are Masses like the Easter Vigil or Christmas Eve. But there are other Solemnities that have their own vigils, such as the Ascension of the Lord, Pentecost, and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

An “anticipatory Mass” is one that is celebrated the evening before that uses the same prayers and readings of the feast day. The most recognizable examples of anticipatory Masses are the vast majority of Saturday evening Masses we celebrate, using the Sunday prayers and readings.

But, not every Solemnity has vigil texts assigned. So, for example, the Solemnity of All Saints does not have its own proper vigil texts, so a Mass celebrated the evening before (after 4 pm) would use the prayers and readings from November 1 and would technically be an “anticipatory Mass.”

Vigils have a long history in the Church, and the liturgical celebration of all Sundays and Solemnities begins with Evening Prayer I of Liturgy of the Hours the preceding day.