

WHAT WE NEED TO CELEBRATE THE MASS

The **altar** is the table where the priest consecrates bread and wine. The **priest** makes Jesus present and acts in his name.



A group of Christians.
You are a Christian by your baptism.

Two **books** are used at Mass: the missal contains the prayers of the Mass, and the lectionary contains the readings.



One **cruet** contains water, while the other cruet contains wine.

Holy vessels



chalice ciborium paten

Bread and wine

The Mass is the commemoration of what Jesus did during the Last Supper with his disciples, before he died. The bread is shaped like a small disc and is called a "host."



The **ambo** is the place where the word of God is proclaimed.

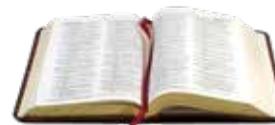
THE FOUR MAIN PARTS OF THE MASS

On the following pages you will find the words that the priest says and the responses we say together during each part of the Mass. You will also find explanations and responses to many questions that people ask about the Mass.



The Introductory Rites

The Lord brings us together.
We ask God for forgiveness.
We give glory to God.



The Liturgy of the Word

We listen to the word of God.
We profess our faith.
We pray for the whole world.



The Liturgy of the Eucharist

We offer bread and wine to God.
We give thanks to God.
We say the Lord's Prayer.
We share the peace of Christ.
We receive Jesus in communion.



The Concluding Rites

The Lord sends us forth to live the gospel.

The Lord Brings Us Together

We come together in church with family, friends, neighbors, and strangers. We are here because Jesus has invited us to be here.

When the priest comes in, we stand and sing. Then we make the sign of the cross along with the priest.

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Everyone: Amen.

Sometimes, the words can change a bit, but usually the priest will say:

Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Everyone: And with your spirit.



Questions

Why do we celebrate Mass on Sunday?

Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday, the day after the Sabbath. This is why Christians gather on that day. Over time, people started to call it “the Lord’s day.”

Why do we celebrate Mass in a church?

Churches are built specially for Christians to gather in. If needed, Mass can be celebrated in other places: a home, a school, a plaza, a jail, a hospital, a park...

Why do we need a priest to celebrate Mass?

We believe that Jesus is present in the person of the priest when Christians gather for the Mass. He presides over the celebration of the Lord’s supper in the name of Jesus Christ.

Gestures

Standing

We stand to welcome Jesus, who is present among us when we gather in his name.

The sign of the cross

With our right hand we make the sign of the cross (from our forehead to our chest, from our left shoulder to our right) and say “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” This is how all Catholic prayer begins.

Singing

This is a joyful way to pray together.



We Pray for the Whole World

This is the moment of the Universal Prayer of the Faithful when we present our **petitions** to God. We pray for the Church, for all of humanity, for those who are sick or lonely, for children who are abandoned, for those who suffer through natural disasters...

After each petition we respond with a phrase, such as:

Everyone: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: For the needs of the Church...

For peace in every country...

For the hungry and the homeless...

For ourselves and for all God's children...

What Does It Mean?

Petitions

Petitions are prayers asking for something specific. Each week at Mass, the petitions change because the needs of the world and our community change. We stand for the petitions and answer "Amen" at the end. Sometimes we call these prayers intentions.

Why do we call the Prayer of the Faithful "universal"?

It is a universal prayer because it includes everyone: we pray for all the people of the world.

Why do we take up a collection?

Christians help out with the maintenance of the church building and also help people who are in need. These gifts are brought to the altar with the bread and the wine.



We Offer Bread and Wine to God

The celebration of the Lord's Supper continues at the altar. Members of the community bring the bread, the wine, and the gifts collected to relieve the needs of the Church and the poor. The priest receives the gifts and then with him we bless God for the bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Jesus.

We sit down. The priest takes the bread and wine, and lifts them up, saying:

Priest: **Blessed** are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.

Everyone: Blessed be God for ever.

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.

Everyone: Blessed be God for ever.

The priest washes his hands. Then we all stand and the priest says:

Priest: Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

Everyone: May the Lord accept the **sacrifice** at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his holy Church.

The priest, with hands extended, says a prayer over the bread and wine. He usually ends the prayer by saying:

Priest: Through Christ our Lord.

Everyone: Amen.

November 29

1st Sunday of Advent



First Reading (Isaiah 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7)

You, LORD, are our father,
 our **redeemer** you are named forever.
 Why do you let us wander, O Lord, from your ways,
 and harden our hearts so that we fear you not?
 Return for the sake of your servants,
 the tribes of your heritage.
 Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
 with the mountains quaking before you,
 while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for,
 such as they had not heard of from of old.
 No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you
 doing such deeds for those who wait for him.
 Would that you might meet us doing right,
 that we were mindful of you in our ways!
 Behold, you are angry, and we are sinful;
 all of us have become like unclean people,
 all our good deeds are like polluted rags;
 we have all withered like leaves,
 and our guilt carries us away like the wind.
 There is none who calls upon your name,
 who rouses himself to cling to you;
 for you have **hidden your face** from us
 and have delivered us up to our guilt.
 Yet, O LORD, you are our father;
 we are the clay and you the potter:
 we are all the work of your hands.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19)

R. Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous deeds.

Sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done wondrous deeds;
His right hand has won victory for him,
his holy arm. **R.**

The Lord has made his salvation known:
in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice.
He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness
toward the house of Israel. **R.**

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation by our God.
Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands;
break into song; sing praise. **R.**

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 1:3-9)

Brothers and sisters: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse and all knowledge, as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on **the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**. God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel (Mark 13:33-37)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples: "Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to all: 'Watch!'"

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



Key Words

With the season of **Advent**, which means “coming,” we begin a new liturgical year. Advent lasts four weeks and during this time the liturgical color is violet or purple. Purple is the color of waiting; it reminds us to prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas and his return at the end of time.

To redeem is to buy something back or to pay to free someone. God is called our **Redeemer** because God freed Israel from slavery in Egypt. Christ is our Redeemer, for by his resurrection he freed us from the power of death.

When the Bible says that God has **hidden his face**, it means that we think God has turned away or is angry. But we know that God is always near and we are the ones who have turned our backs to God.

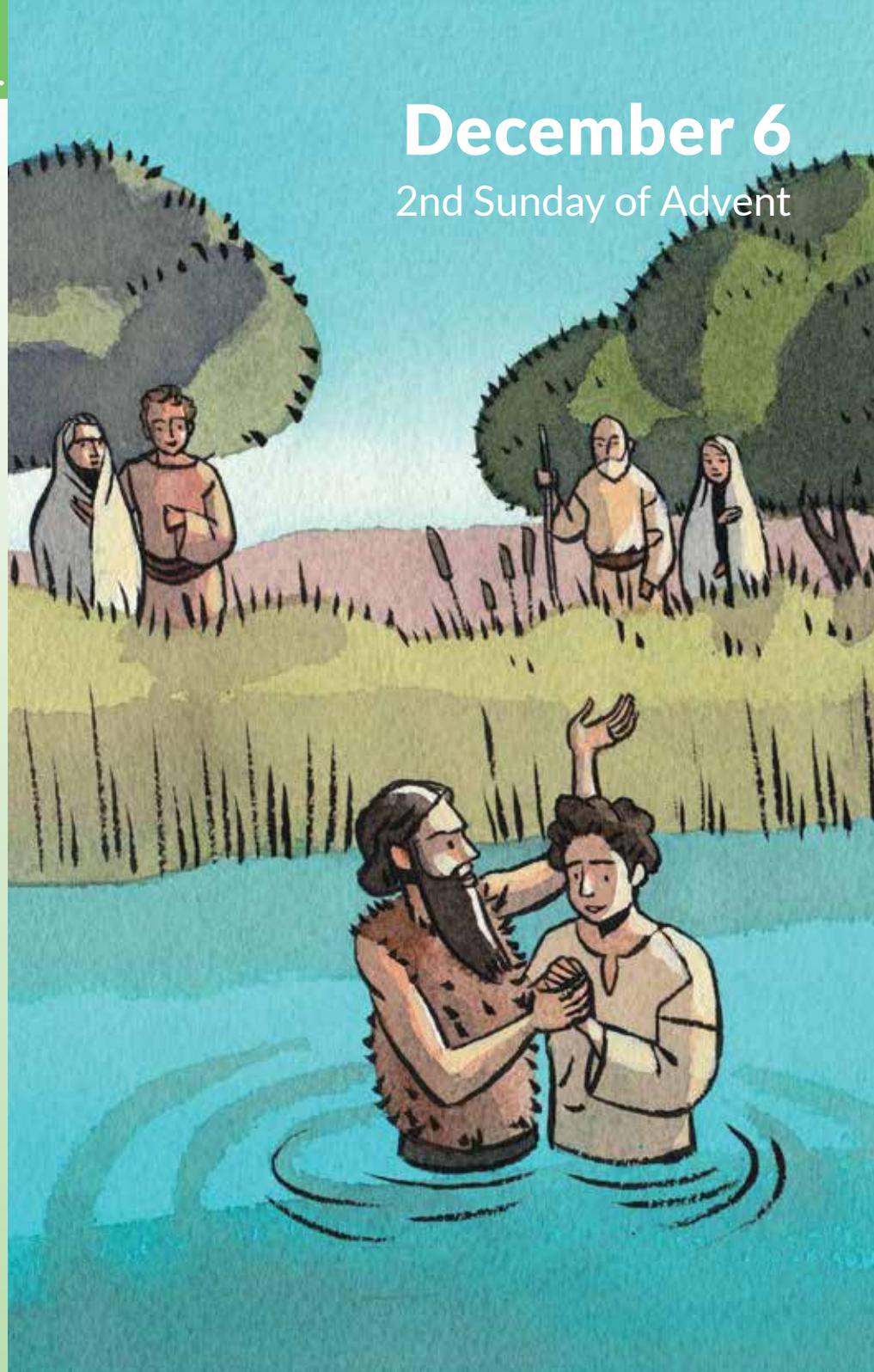
Cherubim (the plural of cherub) are a type of angel. In the Bible they are the ones who watch over the entrance to the Garden of Eden. To show that God is above everything, the Psalmist says that God’s throne is above the cherubim.

When Saint Paul refers to **the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**, he is speaking about the end of the world—the day human history will end and we will see God face to face.

The holy Gospel according to Mark is the earliest and the shortest of the four gospels. The other gospels were written by Matthew, Luke, and John. This year, most of the gospel readings will come from Mark

December 6

2nd Sunday of Advent



Let Go and Let God

God of peace and acceptance,
things do not often go the way we want them to go.
We can be disappointed,
particularly when we want something really badly
and it doesn't work out.

We pray today to be granted the ability
to accept things that we are not able to change.

We pray for peace of mind and heart.

Please grant us the faith to trust in you.

Help us to follow the words in the Serenity Prayer:

“God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.”

Amen.

Let's Live the Love of Jesus

Kind God, today we reflect on the gift of your Son.

When we look at his example,
we know that each of us is called to a life
of service and compassion.

He did not associate with the rich and established.

Rather, he chose to spend time with the lowly and the outcast.

Help us to live in solidarity with the people
that Jesus chose to spend time with.

May our actions help create a world where love prevails.

We pray that we have the courage, strength, and wisdom
to respond to this call, fully and completely.

Amen.

Excerpted from Filomena Tassi and Peter Tassi, *365 Prayers for Catholic Schools and Parish Youth Groups* (Twenty-Third Publications, 2016).

Prayer for the Beginning of the School Day

God of wisdom,
you call us to grow in your grace
with hearts to love you,
with souls open to you,
with minds to learn from you.
Help us to see beyond distractions
and keep our vision clear—
a vision of your reign.
Amen.

Prayer at the Closing of the School Day

Loving God,
our creator, our friend,
our companion,
bless our journey of learning.
Refresh our souls and renew
our spirits.

Lead us in paths of wisdom,
compassion and understanding.
Bless us with an enduring love of learning.
May the Holy Spirit flow freely
through the classrooms and halls of our school,
through the rooms and gardens of our home,
through our churches and our nation.
We make this prayer in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

Lisa Freemantle and Les Miller, *Words for the Journey: Ten-Minute Prayer Services for Teachers and Administrators* (Novalis, 2009).

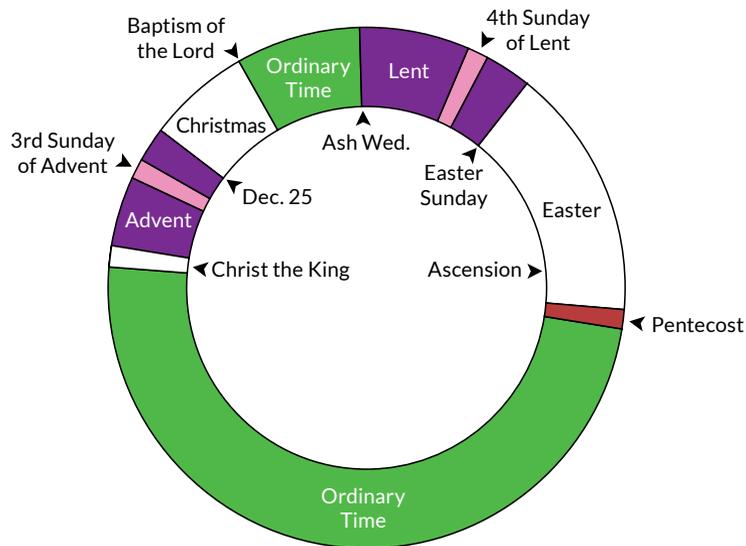


THE LITURGICAL YEAR

The readings for Sunday Mass and feast days change according to the liturgical calendar.

What is the liturgical year?

Throughout the year, Christians celebrate together important moments in Jesus' life. This is the liturgical year. There are five seasons: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Ordinary Time.



Advent is a time of waiting. It begins 4 Sundays before Christmas. We prepare to welcome Jesus.

Christmas time celebrates the life of Jesus from his birth to his baptism. It includes Epiphany: Jesus welcomes the whole world.

During the 40 days of **Lent** we prepare for the great feast of Easter, the most important moment of the year.

Easter time is a season to celebrate Jesus' victory over death. It lasts from Easter Sunday to Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit comes upon the disciples.

The season in green above is called **Ordinary Time** because the Sundays are arranged using "ordinal numbers." It recounts many of the things Jesus did and said during his lifetime.

SACRAMENTS: A GIFT FROM GOD

Sacraments are rituals through which we receive God's grace. Grace is the gift of God's love and strength, given freely to us to help us lead good and just lives. Sacraments always involve signs appealing to our senses that point to God's saving presence in our lives. Baptism requires water, for example, and when we are confirmed, we are anointed with a special oil called chrism.

The seven sacraments of the Catholic Church are **Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, Holy Orders**, and the **Anointing of the Sick**.

Sometimes you will hear people refer to **Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Healing**, and **Sacraments of Service**.

The **Sacraments of Initiation**—Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation—help welcome us into a life of faith.

The **Sacraments of Healing** are Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick. Reconciliation helps us when our actions have injured our relationship with God, while the Anointing of the Sick helps us physically, mentally, and spiritually when we face illness and suffering.

The **Sacraments of Service**—Marriage and Holy Orders (priesthood)—are linked to our call to serve others.



The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders can only be received once. As Catholics, we believe that when these sacraments are received, they leave a lasting mark—or seal—on the soul.