

OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

OCTOBER 2026

Website for the Office for Divine Worship

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LITURGICAL CALENDAR ITEMS

800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

October 3, 2026

Letter of the Holy Father, Leo XIV, to the Ministers General of the Conference of the Franciscan Family on the Occasion of the Opening of the Eighth Centenary of the Death of Saint Francis of Assisi

<https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/letters/2026/documents/20260107-lettera-morte-sf.html>

Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary for the Eighth Centenary of the Death of Saint Francis of Assisi, Proclaiming a Special Jubilee Year with the Concession of Penary Indulgences

<https://www.vatican.va/content/romancuria/en/organismi-di-giustizia/penitenzieria-apostolica/documenti/20260110-indulgenze-sanfrancesco.html>

RESPECT LIFE SUNDAY

TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sunday, October 4, 2026

The USCCB Respect Life Program begins anew each year on Respect Life Sunday, the first Sunday in October. The program is highlighted in liturgies and marked by special events. The USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities publishes a program packet each year to call attention to numerous human life issues. These materials are especially helpful for priests, parish groups, schools, and other organizations. For more information or to request packets, visit:

<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program/>

Intentions for the Universal Prayer for Respect Life can be found on the website for the Office for Divine Worship.

Priests and deacons may consider, in conjunction with Respect Life Sunday, using the Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb, published by the United States Conferences of Catholic Bishops in 2012. For more information on this Rite and to order in English or Spanish, see:

<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/prayers/pro-life-blessings.cfm>.

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

TWENTY NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sunday, October 18, 2026

*The Mass for the Evangelization of Peoples, number 18 of the Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions in the Roman Missal, may be used on World Mission Sunday. The Readings can be those of the Sunday or those for the *Evangelization of Peoples* in Volume IV of the *Lectionary for Mass*.*

TIME OF THE EASTER VIGIL 2027

The Easter Vigil is the first Mass of Easter Sunday and is not in any way to be considered an Anticipated Mass for Easter Sunday. **This is why the discipline of the Church insists that it should not begin before nightfall in any circumstance.** It may be helpful to know that sunset, according to a variety of models, occurs approximately at 7:20 PM on March 27, 2027. This information is provided at this time to assist with calendar planning for 2027. In general, given the variable date for Easter, it seems best to schedule the Easter Vigil each year for 8:00 PM or later.

CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

The Office for Divine Worship has the responsibility for direction, guidance and support of pastors and those who collaborate with them in the formation of adults for Christian Initiation. Additional information on Christian Initiation for adults can be found on the website for the Office for Divine Worship, under the heading *Christian Initiation*.

Please see the flyer attached to this mailing about the workshop on Christian Initiation for adults on Saturday, October 17, 2026.

PLEASE NOTE

Full Sacramental Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation and the first Reception of Holy Communion—apart from the Easter Vigil, outside of the immediate danger of death, requires the permission of the Archbishop (see OCIA, no. 331). Archbishop Perez delegates the Office for Divine Worship to give this permission. Please contact the Office for Divine Worship for such circumstances.

If there are any questions about the celebration of Baptism in unusual or irregular circumstances, please contact the Office for Divine Worship.

WORKSHOPS FOR LITURGICAL MINISTERS

If any parish or institution would like a workshop for liturgical ministers, especially Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, please contact the Office for Divine Worship. If a parish or institution conducts its own workshop for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, please contact the Office for Divine Worship to obtain the mandate letters from the Archbishop of Philadelphia for the new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

WORKSHOPS

The full schedule of liturgical ministry workshops for 2026-2027 are listed below.

To Register for these workshops, email: worship@archphila.org

When emailing your registration, please include THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:
Your name, home parish/institution and DATE of the workshop you would like to attend.

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION WORKSHOPS

Tuesday, October 6, 2026

7:00 to 9:00 PM

Saint Joseph Church

1795 Columbia Avenue, Warrington, PA 18976

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

7:00 to 9:00 PM

Saint Bernadette of Lourdes Church

1035 Turner Avenue, Drexel Hill, PA 19026

Tuesday, February 16, 2027

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Blessed Virgin Mary Church

1101 Main Street, Darby, PA 19023

Tuesday, March 2, 2027

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Saint Joseph's University, Chapel of Saint Joseph

2525 Cardinal Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131

Tuesday, March 9, 2027

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Epiphany of Our Lord Church

3050 Walton Road, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Tuesday, April 13, 2027

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Saint Katherine of Siena Church

9700 Frankford Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19114

GENERAL NORMS

- All Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, without exception, are to have a current appointment letter from the Archbishop.

- **Extraordinary Ministers who serve in institutions and schools throughout the Archdiocese are typically commissioned for service in their parishes and likewise commissioned for service in the institution and/or school.**
- Candidates are to be fully initiated practicing Catholics, high school graduates, not in an invalid marriage, recognized for faith and devotion to the Holy Eucharist as well as for service in the parish/institution/school. Pastors/chaplains are reminded to be discerning in the invitation to members of the lay faithful to carry out this ministry.
- Pastors and chaplains are encouraged to send new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the archdiocesan formation and training sessions. Letters of Appointment from the Archbishop will then follow. *Veteran Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are also welcome to attend.*
- Pastors and chaplains are reminded to inform the Office for Divine Worship if they conduct their own formation and training as well as to send to this office their request for new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Request forms can be found on the Office for Divine Worship website. Letters of Appointment from the Archbishop will then follow.
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are appointed for a three-year term and for the place where they are commissioned. Terms may be renewed if agreeable to both the pastor/chaplain and the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. All records of active Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are maintained by the parish/institution/school.
- **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are commissioned after participation in a formation and training session, according to the form found in the *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 63, "Order for the Commissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion."**
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion **only** serve in the parishes/institutions/schools for which they are commissioned.

GUIDELINES FOR THE BUILDING AND RENOVATING OF CHURCHES AND CHAPELS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia, in addition to what is described in the liturgical ritual books, follows the guidelines of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for the building and renovating of churches and chapels. These guidelines are found in the USCCB document, *Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture and Worship*, 2007, Fifth Printing, revised.

GUIDELINES FOR CHAPELS IN RECTORIES

The Office for Divine Worship, according to the Archdiocesan Policy Manual, has oversight for Chapels in Rectories. Pastors are asked to review these guidelines for compliance. Please direct any questions or concerns about chapels in rectories to the Office for Divine Worship.

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

IN GENERAL

- Two publishers are printing the four volumes of the Liturgy of the Hours – Ascension Press and Word on Fire.
- The publishers have been accepting pre-orders since July 1, 2026.
- The volumes will be released gradually (the same happened in 1975).
- The first volume to ship will be Volume II – Lent and Easter seasons.
- Each volume will be shipped approximately one month before its permitted first use date.
- It is anticipated that digital and one volume editions will be available by the First Sunday of Advent 2028.
- Mandatory use for the revised translation of the Liturgy of the Hours is the **First Sunday of Advent 2028**.

TIMELINE

DATE	ACTION
July 1, 2026	Publishers accept pre-orders for all four volumes, even though they will ship in increments.
January 2027	Volume II (Lent and Easter) ships
Feb 10, 2027	Volume II may be used (Ash Wednesday)
April 2027	Volume III (Ordinary Time Weeks 1-17) may be shipped
May 17, 2027	Volume III may be used (Monday after Pentecost)
July 2027	Volume IV (Ordinary Time Weeks 18-34) may be shipped
August 1, 2027	Volume IV may be used
October 2027	Volume I (Advent-Christmas) may be shipped
November 28, 2027	First Sunday of Advent -- Volume I may be used
2028	Digital editions, one volume major extracts, and minor extracts
December 3, 2028	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT – MANDATORY USE

“Once that [four-volume] process is complete, work will turn to the review and publication of the one-volume major extracts; they are expected to go on sale in mid-2028. In addition, various minor extracts of the Divine Office—General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, Daytime Prayer, Compline, etc.—will be published at some point during 2027 or 2028” (Father Dustin Dought, Executive Director, BCDW Secretariat).

PUBLISHERS

Ascension Press,

<https://ascensionpress.com/pages/content-hub/liturgy-of-the-hours>

Word on Fire,

https://www.liturgyofthehours.com/?_gl=1*_gohq1k*_gcl_au*ODg2NDMyODc3LjE3NzcxOTkxNjQ.

PRESENTATIONS ON THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

<https://adoremus.org/2026/01/the-liturgy-of-the-hours-online-lecture-series-presented-by-the-society-for-catholic-liturgy/>

RECURRING INFORMATION

THE PRAYER TO SAINT MICHAEL, THE ARCHANGEL

Many parishes and institutions within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia pray the prayer to Saint Michael in conjunction with the celebration of Mass. You are reminded that this devotional prayer is to take place outside of Mass. It is not to be prayed as the concluding prayer of the Universal Prayer nor as part of the Communion Rite.

TIME FOR VIGIL MASSES AND ANTICIPATED MASSES

The time for Vigil Masses and Anticipated Masses in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is no earlier than 4:00 PM. This applies to Holy Days of Obligation as well, including Christmas.

THE MASS SCHEDULE FOR HOLY DAYS WHEN THE OBLIGATION IS SUSPENDED

In the United States, there are three Holy Days, Solemnities, when the obligation to participate in Mass is suspended when the observance falls on a Monday or a Saturday—the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (January 1), the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15), and the Solemnity of All Saints (November 1). In these instances, the Mass schedule certainly can be modified. However, there should be the celebration of one Mass at least for the benefit of the faithful who desire to attend Mass.

LINKS TO HELPFUL INFORMATION

THE LITURGICAL EXCHANGE

For information about the new Liturgical Exchange in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, please see: <https://www.liturgicaexchange.com/>.

FOR THE MOST RECENT NEWSLETTER FROM THE USCCB

Individual issues of the Newsletter are posted online around the fifteenth of the month approximately three months after they have been released to subscribers.

For information on subscribing to the newsletter, visit:

<https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/newsletter>.

FOR PAST MONTHLY MAILINGS OF THE OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Visit: <http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/monthly-mailings/>.