

OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

SEPTEMBER 2026

New Mailing address:

Office for Divine Worship
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
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Website for the Office for Divine Worship

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LITURGICAL CALENDAR ITEMS

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE CARE OF CREATION

Tuesday, September 1, 2026

Pope Francis established this observance in September 2015 following a similar observance in the Eastern Church. The homily on this day, as well as an intention in the Universal Prayer, should call to mind this observance.

Additional resources for Prayers to Care of Creation can be found on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/prayers-to-care-for-creation.cfm>.

MASS FOR THE OPENING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR

A votive *Mass of the Holy Spirit* may be scheduled for the opening of the academic year on weekdays when there is no liturgical impediment. The *Roman Missal* provides three options for this Votive Mass. One of the prefaces of the Holy Spirit is used and red vestments are worn. The Lectionary texts for the day are preferable.

Also, see the options in the *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 5: Order for the Blessing of Students and Teachers, for another way to celebrate liturgically the opening of the academic year.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER FOR CHILDREN FOR USE WITH THE ROMAN MISSAL, THIRD EDITION

The three *Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children* for use with the *Roman Missal* are available as a supplement to the Missal. Copies of these prayers can be obtained from Catholic Book Publishing, <https://catholicbookpublishing.com/product/1650>.

The introduction to the *Eucharistic Prayers for Children* highlights several significant pastoral and ritual issues. The *Eucharistic Prayers for Children* are strictly limited to Masses celebrated with children (no. 14). Emphasis is to be given to singing the responses and acclamations proper to the Prayers. Catechetical instruction on “internal participation” in the saving event of the Eucharistic Prayer should precede celebrations with children and the use of the *Eucharistic Prayers for Children*.

MEMORIAL OF SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA

Saturday, September 5, 2026

On December 24, 2024, Pope Francis ordered the inscription of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Virgin, into the General Roman Calendar, to be observed as an Optional Memorial. Please see, <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-worship/liturgical-year/saint-teresa-of-calcutta>, for available interim texts for the liturgical observance.

CATECHETICAL SUNDAY

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Sunday, September 20, 2026

The Church in the United States will observe Catechetical Sunday on September 20, 2026. On this day, catechists are formally commissioned for ministry to the community. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each baptized person plays in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Catechetical

Sunday is an opportunity for all to rededicate themselves to this mission as a community of faith.

Please see the website of the USCCB for additional resources:

<https://www.usccb.org/committees/evangelization-catechesis/catechetical-sunday-2025>

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, September 8, 2026

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Saints Peter and Paul Church

1325 Boot Road, West Chester, PA 19380

Tuesday, October 6, 2026

7:00 to 9:00 PM

Saint Joseph Church

1795 Columbia Avenue, Warrington, PA 18976

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.

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.liturgicalexchange.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/>.