



September 2025

Liturgical Notes: Fall 2025 through Early 2026

Fall Calendar Notes

➤ Upcoming Holy Days of Obligation

- Monday, December 8 — Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
- Thursday, December 25 — Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord
- Thursday, January 1, 2026 — Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

- ◆ **Reminder:** Funeral Masses and ritual Masses are not permitted on any Holy Day of Obligation. In addition, ritual Masses are not permitted on solemnities, whether or not they are holy days of obligation. The “Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass” found in the *Order of Christian Funerals*, nos. 177-203, may be used on holy days.

➤ New Optional Memorial of St. Teresa of Calcutta on September 5, plus other upcoming celebrations not found in the Roman Missal

This is the first year that the September 5th optional memorial of St. Teresa of Calcutta is included in the General Roman Calendar.

This memorial, as well as a number of recently added universal, national, and diocesan saint celebrations, are now listed in the Ordo but not found in the 2011 Roman Missal itself.

However, a listing of these observances – along with all the available prayers and readings information – can be found [in this diocesan Missal supplement](#).

The USCCB has also [created this helpful webpage](#), which provides the available materials from the Liturgy of the Hours for the new universal and U.S. observances.



➤ Observing All Saints on Saturday, Nov 1, and All Souls on Sunday, Nov 2

Saturday, November 1st, is not a holy day of obligation. The USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship offers these further clarifications: “On Saturday evening (Nov. 1), any normally scheduled anticipated Masses should be for All Souls’ Day. (If desired for pastoral reasons, a Mass of All Saints Day outside the usual Mass schedule may be celebrated on Saturday evening.)”

The Secretariat of Divine Worship also provides the following chart to help outline how to approach Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours on those two days.

Date	Evening Mass	Liturgy of the Hours
Saturday, November 1, 2025	All Souls (Anticipated)	Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer II of All Saints (EP of the Dead optional after EPII of All Saints)
Sunday, November 2, 2025	All Souls	<i>Individual recitation: Morning & Evening Prayer II of the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time</i> <i>Celebrated with the People: Office of the Dead</i>

Also, since Ritual Masses are not permitted on solemnities, the Ritual Mass for the Celebration of Marriage may not be used on Saturday, November 1st. Rather, either the Order of Celebrating Matrimony could be celebrated outside Mass, or the Marriage ritual and the nuptial blessing could be used within the Mass of All Saints. Funeral Masses are permitted on November 1st since All Saints is not a holy day.

➤ The Dual Obligations for Second Sunday of Advent and Immaculate Conception

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Monday, December 8), our national patronal feast, remains a holy day of obligation even when it falls on a Monday.

The preceding day – Sunday, December 7 (Second Sunday of Advent) – also has its own, distinct obligation. There are thus two separate obligations to fulfill.

Since the Second Sunday of Advent outranks Immaculate Conception, on the evening of Sunday, December 7, the prayers and readings of the Second Sunday of Advent would still be used.

(December 7 and 8 Obligations continued on next page)



Nonetheless, attending Mass on Sunday evening (anytime after 4:00 PM on Dec 7) can count towards **either** the Second Sunday of Advent obligation **or** the Immaculate Conception obligation—**but not both**. This chart may prove helpful in explaining the dynamics:

Second Sunday of Advent (Dec 7)	Immaculate Conception (Dec 8)
Obligation may be fulfilled from the evening of Saturday, December 6 (starting 4:00 PM) through the end of Sunday, December 7.	Obligation may be fulfilled from the evening of Sunday, December 7 (starting 4:00 PM) through the end of Monday, December 8.
One may attend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evening anticipated Mass for the Second Sunday of Advent on Saturday, December 6 • Morning/afternoon/evening Masses on Sunday, December 7 	One may attend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afternoon/evening Masses after 4 PM on Sunday, December 7 (even though the Mass texts will be for the Second Sunday of Advent) • Morning/afternoon/evening Masses on Monday, December 8

So this year, for example, someone can go to a Mass in the morning on Sunday (Dec 7) to fulfill the Second Sunday of Advent obligation, and then go to another Second Sunday of Advent Mass after 4:00 PM also on Sunday to fulfill the Immaculate Conception obligation.

No matter how it is accomplished, the key is that the two obligations must be fulfilled separately.

➤ **New Ritual Book: *Order of the Anointing of the Sick & of their Pastoral Care***

Both a new English translation of the *Order of the Anointing of the Sick and of their Pastoral Care* and Spanish translation of the *Ritual de la Unción de los enfermos y de su atención pastoral* have been approved for the United States. These will replace the clerical rites in our existing *Pastoral Care of the Sick* book, which had included rites for both clergy and laity.

Per the USCCB, this revised ritual edition may ship as of January 2026 and be used as of February 11, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Mandatory use begins Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026. Pre-orders are available now with five publishers, and ordering information (with various discounts offered through the diocesan bookstore) is being provided under separate cover.

(Anointing of the Sick & Pastoral Care notes continued on next page)



This new *Anointing of the Sick and of Their Pastoral Care* is intended solely for use by clergy. The USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship provides the following details:

“Compared with the Latin typical edition, *Pastoral Care of the Sick* was rearranged in a manner suitable for both clergy and lay ministers, and included a multitude of options for prayers and readings. The *Order of the Anointing of the Sick* restores the typical edition’s arrangement and includes options that are fewer in number. By reorienting the use of this ritual book to only priests and deacons, the new translation will be much easier for clergy to use in pastoral settings...

“Along with the English and Spanish translations, the Holy See also confirmed several ritual and textual adaptations for this country. First, the new edition retains several adaptations present in the current text concerning the qualifications for the reception of the sacrament (for example, PCS no. 53), though simplified and incorporated into no. 8 of the introduction. Additionally, although the typical edition does not include a “short form” of Anointing for use in hospitals and institutions, the USCCB added a rubric at the beginning of the Anointing of the Sick chapter allowing priests to omit some elements from the ordinary rite of Anointing when visiting multiple patients in a hospital or institution. Also, some material not present in the typical edition but included in *Pastoral Care of the Sick* has been retained in the new Anointing rites. Model rites for visiting a sick adult and a sick child, Christian Initiation in danger of death (cf. *OCIA*, nos. 370-399), prayers after death (cf. *Order of Christian Funerals*, nos. 101-108), and the emergency rite of Penance, Anointing, and Viaticum will appear as Appendices I-IV in the *Order of the Anointing of the Sick*, respectively.”

Administration of Communion to the Sick by an Extraordinary Minister:

Once *Pastoral Care of the Sick* is replaced next spring, the only approved English texts for EMHCs to the sick will be those rites that were included in Chapter II of *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery Outside Mass* (HCWEMOM), which was implemented last year.

Those rites for laity are now also available in an updated [Communion of the Sick booklet](#) published by Liturgical Press. All extraordinary ministers to the sick should obtain this resource so they have the correct version of the rites approved for their use.

It is possible a more robust ritual book for lay ministry to the sick (including prayers for the dying & viaticum) will be available in the future. Until then, use the resource above.



➤ Christmas Notes and Reminders

- Genuflection at Christmas Masses – At all Masses for the Nativity of the Lord, the assembly should be reminded beforehand to **genuflect during the Creed** at the mention of the Incarnation: **“and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.”** Particularly on this day (and also on the Solemnity of the Annunciation), we pay homage to the great mystery of the Incarnation by symbolically touching ourselves to the ground, just as the Son of God came down among us as man.
- “Since the Christmas season begins with the Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve and ends with the Baptism of the Lord, the placement and removal of Christmas decorations should coincide with these times” (*Built of Living Stones*, #125). If a manger or crèche scene is set up in church, it should be not be placed in the main part of the sanctuary, but should be somewhere easily accessible for the prayer and devotion of the faithful (*Book of Blessings* #1544). The Nativity scene should only be blessed once each season (typically at the first Mass on Christmas Eve, or prior to it), though it could be revered with incense at subsequent Christmas liturgies.
- **The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ from the Roman Martyrology** – Located in Appendix I of the Roman Missal, it “may be chanted or recited, most appropriately during the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours. It may also be chanted or recited before the beginning of Christmas Mass during the Night.” This proclamation “may not replace any part of the [Christmas] Mass.”
- **The Announcement of Easter and the Moveable Feasts** – Found in Appendix I, this may be proclaimed after the Gospel at “Mass during the Day” for the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord (Jan. 4, 2026).
- **Blessing of Homes** – The Christmas season—and especially Epiphany—is a traditional time when homes are blessed. Parishes could promote the pious Epiphany custom of families using chalk (which can be blessed and distributed by the parish ahead of time) to mark both the year and the initials of the Magi (which also form a Latin abbreviation for “May Christ bless this house”) above the doors of their homes: **20+C+B+M+26**. This could be done in conjunction with a home blessing provided online by the USCCB:
<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/blessing-home-and-household-epiphany>



- **Regarding the song “Mary, Did You Know?”** – A reminder: the Christmas song titled “Mary, Did You Know?” has become popular through radio and pop culture, and has sometimes been adopted in liturgical contexts around Christmas. However, several rhetorical questions posed to Mary in the song’s lyrics present difficulties for us as Catholics. Besides the fact that the first chapter of Luke’s Gospel makes it clear that Mary did indeed know that her Son would bring salvation and rule the nations, the biggest problem comes in these lines: “Did you know that your Baby Boy has come to make you new? This Child that you delivered will soon deliver you.” This is at least an implicit denial of the Immaculate Conception, by which Mary was extraordinarily preserved from sin at her first moment of existence. While there is an atemporal side to God’s activity, at face value “This Child that you delivered will soon deliver you” conveys a sense of Mary at that moment still awaiting salvation along with everyone else (as opposed to being already cleansed by a “prevenient grace,” as the Prayer over the Offerings for Immaculate Conception on December 8 says). And since the song was not written by/for Catholics, that’s surely the intent. But we have to affirm that Mary was not still awaiting a future salvation when Jesus was born—in fact, her purity was necessary for the Incarnation. Due to these problematic lyrics, this song should not be employed in any liturgical context—even as prelude music.

(Notes for dates in 2026 found on next page)



Looking Ahead to 2026

Rite of Election / Calling to Continuing Conversion:

- Fort Wayne: Sunday, February 15, 2:30 PM — St. Charles Borromeo Church
- South Bend: Sunday, February 22, 2:30 PM — St. Pius X Church, Granger

Chrism Masses:

- South Bend: Monday, March 30, 7:00 PM — St. Matthew Cathedral
- Fort Wayne: Tuesday, March 31, 7:00 PM — Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Easter Vigil Start Time, 2026

On Saturday, April 4, 2026, the end of civil twilight is at 8:36 PM EDT on the Fort Wayne side, and 8:42 PM EDT on the South Bend side. Therefore, about 8:40 PM would be the earliest possible time to begin the Easter Vigil in the diocese.

Since the USCCB encourages waiting an extra 15-30 minutes (because total darkness occurs after civil twilight ends), 9:00 PM or later would be the most appropriate start time.

The Roman Missal states that the Vigil must begin “after nightfall.”

Adult Confirmation Dates, 2026

(Sign-ups will be sent after Easter)

- Fort Wayne: Sunday, May 24, 11:30 AM — Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
- South Bend: Sunday, May 31, 11:00 AM — St. Matthew Cathedral