July 7, 2026

HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION – 2027

The following solemnities will be observed as
Holy Days of Obligation in 2027:

January 1, 2027:	**Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God** (Friday)
December 8, 2027:	**The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary** (Wednesday)
December 25, 2027:	**The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)** (Saturday)

The Ascension of the Lord is observed on Sunday, **May 9, 2027** for our Metropolitan Province, as approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Congregation for Bishops.

August 15, 2027, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*Solemnity)*, is a Sunday.
November 1, 2027, All Saints (*Solemnity),* is a Monday.

According to the 1992 general decree of the USCCB, the precept to attend Mass is dispensed when this solemnity falls on a Saturday or a Monday. All the faithful are encouraged to attend mass on this day but are not obliged.

PARTICULAR CELEBRATIONS FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE

In addition to the feasts inscribed in the Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of the United States, all parishes in the Archdiocese should celebrate the following:

March 17, St. Patrick, Bishop, Principal Co-Patron of the Archdiocese: Solemnity.
May 5, Anniversary of Dedication of Metropolitan Cathedral: Feast in all parishes. Solemnity in the Cathedral only.
July 5, **Our Lady of Refuge**, Patroness of the Californias: Obligatory Memorial.
July 24, **St. Francis Solano**, Priest: Obligatory Memorial.
August 13, **St. Emydius**, Bishop, Martyr, Secondary Patron of the Archdiocese: Obligatory Memorial.
October 4, **St. Francis of Assisi**, Religious, Principal Co-Patron of the Archdiocese: Solemnity.

SPECIAL DAYS OF PRAYER

The following dates have been designated as Special Days of Prayer for the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

- **January 1: Day of Prayer for World Peace**
- **January 22: Day of Prayer and Penance for Life** (see below)
- **February 18: Day of Prayer for the General Needs of Humankind.**
- **September 7: Day of Prayer for Human Rights and Labor** *(Labor Day)*
- **November 26: Day of Prayer for the Fruits of the Earth** *(Thanksgiving Day)*

The faithful of the Archdiocese are asked to observe these Special Days of Prayer in their devotions or other private prayer, in the General Intercessions of the Mass and through the selection of other liturgically proper prayers for the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours.
In all the dioceses of the United States of America, **January 22** is observed as a particular **Day of Prayer and Penance for Life** for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life. The Mass "For Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life" or the Mass "For Peace and Justice" (no. 22 of the "Masses for Various Needs") should be celebrated with the color of vestments corresponding to the appropriate liturgical observance for this day. (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 373)

HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION

The following brief description of Holy Days of Obligation in the dioceses of the United States of America is designed to provide some clarification. (Excerpted and adapted from the NCCB Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy Newsletter, Volume XXXII, Sept. 1997.)

- *December 8 (**The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**) is always a day of obligation.*
- *December 25 (**The Nativity of the Lord/Christmas**) is always a day of obligation.*
- *January 1 (**Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**),*
  *August 15 (**Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**), and*
  *November 1 (**Solemnity of All Saints**) are days of obligation only when they fall on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday.*
- ***The Ascension of the Lord** is observed on the Seventh Sunday of Easter for our Metropolitan Province as approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Congregation for Bishops.*

TIMES OF FEASTS

Some liturgical days call for the celebration to be held at a certain time. The following is a brief summary of dates which have a time-specific nature to the celebration and should be used when planning your liturgies:

THURSDAY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER: *The rubrics call for the celebration to be held "in the evening." There is no specific definition for "evening" in the GIRM or calendar of days; however, most definitions show that "evening" usually starts at, or following, sunset.*

FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD: *The Missal states that the liturgy is to occur "on the afternoon of this day, about three o'clock." Allowance is given that for pastoral reasons "a later hour" can be chosen. So 3:00 p.m. or later would be appropriate.*

The Roman Missal allows for an additional liturgical service with the permission of the diocesan bishop "if the size or nature of a parish" would indicate the need for one. Archbishop Cordileone has indicated he will grant permission for a second, later liturgy, particularly in our multi-lingual parishes.

THE EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT: *The Revised Roman Missal states: "The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil must take place during the night, so that it begins after nightfall and ends before daybreak on the Sunday." Nightfall can be determined by various calculations, and it changes from year to year as the date of Easter changes. The Office of Worship will send out a memo at the beginning of the calendar year when the Archbishop has approved the earliest starting time for the Easter Vigil.*

ON THE CELEBRATION OF SACRAMENTS DURING LENT

Parishes often ask whether Masses in which children receive their First Communion can be scheduled during Lent.

While the great preference is that they NOT be scheduled during Lent, there are no explicit prohibitions against this practice within the expressed liturgical law of the Church. At the same time, however, it should be noted that the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has stated, "It is ... appropriate that children receive their First Communion on one or another of the Sundays of Easter."[1] This does not prohibit the reception of First Communion at other times during the year, but it does indicate a customary preference. Additionally, the Church mandates that the faithful are obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once per year, during the Easter season if not at another time during the year,[2] further indicating a customary association between the reception of Holy Communion and the celebration of the Easter mysteries.

The season of Lent has a distinctly penitential and baptismal character.[3] It is a period of purification and enlightenment as it coincides with the immediate preparations for the Church's celebrations of sacraments of initiation.[4] For baptized children preparing to receive their first Holy Communion, Lent is an appropriate time for them to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance for the first time in preparation for first reception of Holy Communion during the Easter season.

The celebration and reception of the Most Holy Eucharist is the goal of the Catholic initiation sequence[5]. Adults entering the Church receive all three sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil, during which the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is most fully symbolized. For our young Catholic children who have already been baptized, the paschal character of their first Holy Communion should be maximized, in part, by a celebration within the Easter season. Thus they will come to realize in a manner appropriate to their age the connection between Holy Communion and the mystery of faith we proclaim at the Eucharist: "When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again."

At the chancery, we are not ignorant of the increasing demands on parish calendars that may require you to move First Communion Masses to March or early April of 2026; however, we would ask that you give due consideration to:
1) promoting an ever greater spiritual observance of Lent in its authentic character among your people; and
2) giving priority in the parish calendar to these important sacramental celebrations taking place during the Easter season.

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[1] "Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts," 20 Feb 1988, no. 103.
[2] Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 920, §§1-2.
[3] Cf. Second Vatican Council, Sacrosanctum Concilium, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, no. 109.
[4] *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 138.
[5] Congregation for Divine Worship, *Christian Initiation* General Introduction, no. 2.

WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS ON SUNDAYS AND SOLEMNITIES

GIRM #372: *Ritual Masses are connected to the celebration of certain Sacraments or Sacramentals. The use of a ritual mass is* ***prohibited on Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter, on solemnities, on the days within the Octave of Easter, on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day), on Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week****, taking due account of the norms given in the ritual books or in the Masses themselves.*

GIRM #374: *In cases of serious need or pastoral advantage, at the direction of the diocesan Bishop or with his permission, an appropriate Mass may be celebrated on any day* ***except solemnities, the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter, days within the Octave of Easter, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day), Ash Wednesday, and Holy Week.***

GIRM #380: *Among the Masses for the Dead, the Funeral Mass holds first place. It may be celebrated on any day* ***except for solemnities that are holy days of obligation, Holy Thursday, the Easter Triduum, and the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter****, with due regard also for all the other requirements of the norm of the law.*

#34 of the second edition of The Order of Celebrating Matrimony provides that:

> *Whenever Marriage is celebrated within Mass, the Ritual Mass "The Celebration of Marriage" is used with sacred vestments of the color white or of a festive color. On those days listed in nos. 1-4 of the Table of Liturgical Days [cf. General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar], however, the Mass of the day is used with its own readings, with inclusion of the Nuptial Blessing, and, if appropriate, the proper formula for the final blessing.*
>
> *If, however, during Christmas and Ordinary Time, the parish community participates in Sunday Mass during which Marriage is celebrated, the Mass of the Sunday is used.*
>
> *Nevertheless, since a Liturgy of the Word adapted for the celebration of Marriage has a great impact of handing on of catechesis about the Sacrament itself and about the duties of the spouses, when the Mass "For the Celebration of Marriage" is not said, one of the readings may be taken from the texts provided for the celebration of Marriage."*