

ADVENT

Liturgical Considerations

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Advent begins December 1, 2019

- ENTRANCE HYMN** Music during Advent remains simple and should not anticipate the full joy of Christmas. During the Introductory rites, music should set the tone of the season. Remember that hymns and anthems should take on the subject of the readings and the season.
- GREETING** Look to the Roman Missal options and consider using a new greeting to mark the start of a new season.
- PENITENTIAL ACT** Consider Option I found in the Sample Invocations for the Penitential Act in Appendix VI of the Roman Missal. These express the past, present, and future, the essence of the Advent Season and liturgical year.
- GLORIA** The Gloria is omitted during Advent, except for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (December 9), the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (December 12), or Ritual Masses (e.g. Marriage, or Confirmation). Please note that Ritual Masses may not be celebrated on Sundays of Advent. Or Solemnities.
- COLLECT** Remember each day has its proper Collect, Prayer Over the Gifts and Prayer After Communion. December 17-24 have proper prayers for each day exclusive of the Forth Sunday of Advent.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

- LECTIONARY** The Advent lectionary this year, Year A, presents Matthew's account with weekdays from Cycle I. Isaiah, the Blessed Virgin Mary and John the Baptist are our companions during Advent.
- CREED** The Creed is prayed on the Sundays of Advent and is usually omitted on weekdays except on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (observed on December 9 this year).
- UNIVERSAL PRAYER** As we anticipate the Nativity of the Lord, remember to pray that Christ will be born anew daily in our hearts so that those we encounter may be transformed by God's love. Pray for immigrants, the homeless, the abandoned, and the hopeless. Work to keep the number to 4 or 5. See Roman Missal Appendix V, #3.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

- PREFACES** The Roman Missal offers two seasonal prefaces for Advent. Preface I of Advent is used from the First Sunday of Advent to December 16 and in other Masses celebrated during the Advent season that do not have their own proper Preface. Preface II of Advent is used in Masses of Advent from December 17-24. Both Prefaces may be used with either Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation.
- EUCCHARISTIC ACCLAMATIONS** When selecting a Mass setting, remember that, although Advent is a season of anticipation, the music should not portray the penitential and somber character of Lent. This is a season of pregnant anticipation, building with each week, yet not as jubilant as Christmas. The selected setting should be sung throughout the season.
- CONCLUDING RITE** A Sunday option may be to offer a Solemn Blessing over the people specific to the Advent season. These blessings can be found in the Roman Missal immediately following the Order of the Mass.
- CLOSING HYMN** Although music during this season should have a lighter feel, that does not imply the elimination of instruments, but rather their use in moderation.



LITURGICAL MUSIC

The use of the organ and other instruments should be marked by moderation in Advent. While the season has a penitential character, the reserved nature of the season should reflect hopeful longing and expectation, but not anticipate the joy of the Christmas season. Avoid the temptation to sing Christmas Carols. Rather look to Advent music: *Creator of the Stars of Night*, *People Look East*, *On Jordan's Bank*, *O Come Divine Messiah* are a few. The "O Antiphons" begin on December 17 and are prominent in "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." It is best to reserve it for the 3rd and 4th Sunday of Advent. Use a common setting for acclamations to unify the season.

ART AND ENVIRONMENT

- LITURGICAL COLOR** The liturgical color of the Advent season is violet. This hue is reminiscent of the night's winter sky just before dawn. The color rose is used on the Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) in response to the liturgical text, which proclaims our joy in the nearness of our Savior!
- ADVENT WREATH** The Advent Wreath is a traditional symbol of the season but should not compete with the primary symbols of Ambo, Altar or Chair. Consider the possibility of suspending the Advent Wreath in the narthex. Make certain the wreath is situated in a place where it will not obscure the visibility of the primary symbols in the sanctuary. Make certain there is only one wreath sized and positioned appropriately.

BLESSINGS

- ADVENT WREATH** The blessing of the Advent Wreath can be celebrated either within the first Mass of Advent, within a separate Liturgy of the Word or the celebration of Evening Prayer. If blessed during the Mass, it should take place following the Universal Prayer. The instruction and blessing can be found in the Book of Blessings, Chapter 47, and clearly presumes it be blessed only once.
- CHILD IN THE WOMB** Advent is a wonderful time of the liturgical year to recognize the precious gift of the child in the womb and to foster respect for human life within society. The USCCB blessing may be used within the context of the Mass as well as outside of Mass.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- IMMACULATE CONCEPTION** The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, is transferred to Monday, December 9, because the Second Sunday of Advent takes precedence. The obligation to attend Mass, however, does not transfer. Sunday evening Masses, where they are regularly celebrated, are celebrated as the Second Sunday of Advent.
- SAINT JUAN DIEGO** The Optional Memorial of Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin, December 9, is omitted this year.

CHRISTMAS MASSES

- CHRISTMAS EVE** Anticipated Masses (sometimes referred to as a Vigil Mass) may not begin earlier than 4 p.m.
- MASSES WITH CHILDREN** The directive given in the Introduction to the *Lectionary for Masses with Children* states, "The Mass is not a historical reenactment of the events of salvation history and care should be taken not to give the impression that the Liturgy of the Word is a play. The use of costumes, etc., is inappropriate. Care should be taken especially at Christmas and during Holy Week and the Easter Triduum not to stage the various liturgies as plays. The Christmas Mass should not be presented as a birthday party for Jesus, nor should secular notions of Santa Claus be introduced into the Christmas liturgy (*Lectionary Masses for Children #52*). Please also note that the readings from the *Lectionary for Masses with Children* may only be used when the Liturgy of the Word with the children is held in a place apart from the main assembly or when children are the vast majority of the assembly. Christmas Masses would not be such an occasion.

MORE ADVENT INFORMATION

For more detailed information regarding Advent liturgies, music, and blessings, please visit:

www.austindiocese.org/advent