



## Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama

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**Very Reverend Justin L. Ward, S.T.L.**  
*Vicar for Sacred Liturgy*

### MEMORANDUM

To: Priests and Deacons of the Diocese  
From: Fr. Justin Ward, Vicar for Sacred Liturgy  
Date: June 18, 2021  
RE: Liturgical Calendar Considerations for 2021-2022

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#### **Solemnity of All Saints 2021**

The obligation to assist at Mass on the Solemnity of All Saints (November 1, 2021) is abrogated this year as it occurs on a Monday. As a rule, the Mass with the obligation attached trumps even a higher rank without an obligation.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Sunday evening Masses should celebrate the Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time. However, EP I for All Saints should be said on Sunday evening.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) 2021 Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph 2021**

The Nativity of the Lord (December 25, 2021) falls on a Saturday and is immediately followed by the Feast of the Holy Family on Sunday (December 26, 2021). On the evening of Saturday, December 25, the Nativity Mass during the Day is celebrated with its accompanying readings from the Lectionary and Evening Prayer II for Christmas is prayed. Evening is understood in the Diocese of Birmingham to begin at 4:00 PM, which is the earliest time ever permitted for anticipated Masses.

Regarding the obligation to assist at both Masses, the prevailing view is that each obligation (in this case one for Christmas and another for Holy Family) **must be fulfilled with a separate Mass**. This is the norm in the Diocese of Birmingham. Please note that the fulfillment of the Mass obligation does not depend upon the Mass prayers and readings but rather on the time of day at which one attends Mass. The faithful should attend two Masses.

#### **Mary, Mother of God and Epiphany 2022**

The obligation to assist at Mass on the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (January 1, 2022) is abrogated this year as it occurs on a Saturday. In the evening, the Vigil Mass of the Epiphany is celebrated and Evening Prayer I of the Epiphany is prayed for the *Liturgy of the Hours*.

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<sup>1</sup> 'De Calendario Liturgico Exarando pro Anno 1984-1985,' *Notitiæ* 20 [1984], 603-605

<sup>2</sup> *General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar* (1969), No. 61.