

Religious Ed Fall & Winter 2015

Spiritual Seasons of the Year

The liturgical year (Church calendar) is as different from the calendar year. As the fiscal year is for most people. The Church calendar begins on a different day than the civil year, but it still contains the same 12 months and 365 days. The liturgical year begins on the first Sunday of Advent, which is four Sundays before Christmas. The last Sunday of the year, the feast of Christ the King, is the Sunday before Advent.

The Catholic liturgical year revolves around two feasts: Christmas and Easter. They are high holy days because they commemorate the birth and Resurrection of the Church's founder, Jesus Christ. The first half of the year focuses on the theme Christ Our Light and is epitomized by Christmas. The second half focuses on the theme Christ Our Life, epitomizes Easter.



Christ Our Light: The first half of the liturgical year

According to the Catholic Church calendar, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, and the Baptism of the Lord all form the Christ our Light theme. *Advent*, the season before Christmas and Christmas itself occur in the winter when the days are short and light is often longed for. Candles decorate the Advent wreath – a wreath of evergreen with four candles, three purple or violet and one rose or pink. Each week of Advent, a candle is lit until the fourth week when all four are ablaze. The colors correspond to the vestments the priest & deacon wear on those Sundays of Advent. Advent wreaths are used in Church & people's homes just to remind people to spiritually prepare for Christmas and to give light during these days of less daylight and to remind the faithful that Jesus is the "Light of the World".

Advent is a time for the faithful to prepare for Christmas spiritually in the midst of all the shopping, decorating, baking & parties. Advent tones down the festivity for Catholics so the real celebration can take place on the birthday of Jesus, Christmas Day.

Make yourself familiar with the angels, and behold them frequently in spirit; for without being seen, they are present in you. *St. Francis deSales*

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent wreath has become a very popular sacramental in the Universal church. Three of the candles are purple, symbolizing the preparation and anticipation of the season. The fourth candle is rose and lit on Gaudette Sunday. Before electricity, candles were the source of light in the church, so lighting these candles during the darkest time of the year gave a great expression of Christ, the light of the world.

If a tiny spark of God's love already burns within you, do not expose it to the wind for it may get blown out. Stay quiet with God. Do not spend your time in useless chatter. Do not give yourself to others so completely that you have nothing left for yourself. St Charles Borromeo

PRAYER OF BLESSING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

O God, by whose word all things are sanctified, Pour forth thy blessing upon this wreath
 may receive from thee abundant graces Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts,

For the coming of Christ and



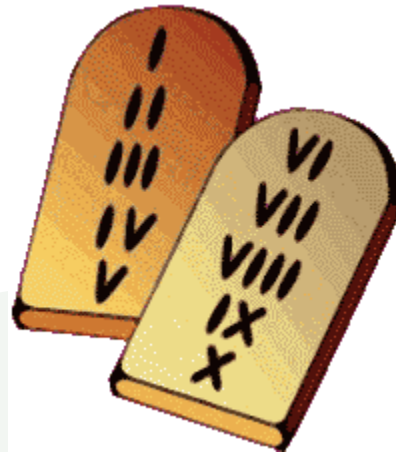
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

God chose Mary to be an important part of his plan of salvation. Mary's role in God's plan is so special that she is free from all sin, from the first moment of her conception and throughout her whole life. The Church calls Mary's freedom from original sin the Immaculate Conception.

God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Mary that she was chosen by God to be the mother of his Son. Even though she did not fully understand what it would mean to be the mother of Jesus, Mary trusted in God. She said, "May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Mary became Jesus' mother through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Children's Ten Commandments

1. Have no other gods.
2. Have no idols.
3. Honor God's name.
4. Honor the Sabbath day.
5. Honor your parents.
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not perjure yourself.
10. Do not covet.



The Twelve Days of Christmas

This well-known English Christmas Carol is more than a arreptitious tune with pretty phrases and strange gifts.. The "Twelve Days of Christmas" is a song with different levels of meaning. It was written as a catechism song in England. The hidden meanings of the songs' gifts were intended to help the children remember lessons of their faith. The "true love"

in the song refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the presents is symbolic to every baptized person, and the "partridge in a pear tree" is Jesus Christ.. The other symbols are: Two turtle doves—The Old and New Testaments; three French hens— Faith, Hope & Charity; Four calling Birds—the four gospels; five golden rings—the first five books of the Old Testament; six geese a laying - the six days of creation; seven swans a singing—seven

gifts of the Holy Spirit; eight maids a milking—the eight Beatitudes; nine ladies dancing—nine fruits of the Holy Spirit; Ten lord's a leaping— the Ten Commandments; Eleven pipers piping— the eleven faithful Disciple ; Twelve drummers drumming— the twelve points of belief stated in the Apostles Creed.

God Grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change the Courage to change the things I can... and the Wisdom to know the difference.



SILENT NIGHT

Silent Night
 Silent night, Holy night
 All is calm, all is bright
 Round yon virgin, mother
 and child
 Holy infant, tender and mild
 Sleep in heavenly peace,
 Sleep in heavenly peace.
 Silent night, Holy night
 Son of God, love's

pure light
 Radiant beams from thy
 holy face
 With the dawn of redeem-
 ing grace,
 Jesus, Lord at thy birth
 Jesus, Lord at thy birth.
 Silent night, Holy night
 Shepherds quake, at the
 sight
 Glories stream from heaven

above
 Heavenly, hosts sing Hallelu-
 jah.
 Christ the Savior is born,
 Christ the Savior is born.

Caption describing picture or graphic.

Upcoming dates / events

Monday, November 16, 2015 at 7PM Grade 8 Reconciliation

Saturday, November 21, 2015—First Reconciliation at 10AM

Sunday, December 6, 2015 at 12Noon—Commitment Mass for all 9th Grade students preparing for Confirmation in the spring of their 10th Grade year.

Sunday, December 13, 2015 from 1Pm—5PM 10th Grade Confirmation retreat in the church hall.

Classes will not be held on Sunday, December 27th and Sunday, January 3rd due to the Christmas and New Year's break.



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