**OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP**

**DECEMBER 2015**

**Website for the Office for Divine Worship**

**Website:** [**www.odwphiladelphia.org**](http://www.odwphiladelphia.org)

**Contact information for the Office for Divine Worship**

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**OBSERVANCE OF THE EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY**

**ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA**

*December 8, 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary,*

*through November 20, 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe*

*(50th Anniversary of the Closing of the Second Vatican Council)*

**PLEASE LOOK FOR SEPARATE MAILINGS FOR THE OPENING, DURING AND THE CLOSING OF THE JUBILEE YEAR FROM THE OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORISHOP AND THE OFFICE FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION.**

Website for Archdiocesan Observance of the Jubilee,

<http://archphila.org/mercy/>.

More complete information can found on the website

of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization, <http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en.html>.

**LITURGICAL CALENDAR ITEMS**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Sunday, November 29, 2015**

The Blessing of an Advent Wreath may take place at the conclusion of the Universal Prayer. See *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 47, Order for the Blessing of an Advent Wreath.” The Advent Wreath need only to be blessed once, perhaps at the Anticipated Mass for the First Sunday of Advent.

*The Lectionary cycles for 2016 are:*

* *Sunday Cycle – Year C*
* *Weekday Cycle – II*

**SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

**OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

**Tuesday, December 8, 2015**

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the patronal feast of the United States of America, is *always* a Holy Day of Obligation, even if it falls on a Monday or Saturday.

**SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)**

**Friday, December 25, 2015**

The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord is *always* a Holy Day of Obligation.

4:00 P.M. is the earliest time in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for a Vigil Mass for the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord.

**THE OCTAVE DAY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD:**

**THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD**

**Friday, January 1, 2016, is a Holy Day of Obligation.**

**FEAST OF SAINT JOHN NEUMANN**

**Tuesday, January 5, 2016**

The commemoration of Saint John Neumann enjoys the rank of a *feast* in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for both the celebration of Mass and the Divine Office. Therefore, both at Mass and for the Liturgy of the Hours those features proper to a *feast* are observed.

**Blessings Related to Advent and Christmas**

* The rite for the blessing of an Advent Wreath, a Manger or a Nativity Scene, a Christmas Tree, and of homes during the Christmas season, are found in the *Book of Blessings*. The introductions to these various blessings offer helpful pastoral and liturgical information. The provided blessings for an Advent Wreath and a Manger or Nativity Scene maintain an important balance and perspective with regard to these elements of devotion and the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.
* Priests and deacons may consider, in conjunction with Advent, using the *Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb*, published by the United States Conferences of Catholic Bishops in 2012. For more information on this Rite and to order in English or Spanish, see: <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/prayers/pro-life-blessings.cfm>

**COLDS AND FLU**

**AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRED LITURGY**

* Ministers of Holy Communion should wash their hands before Mass begins, or even use an alcohol based anti-bacterial solution in the pew before distributing, and after purifying their fingers after the distributing Holy Communion;
* People feeling ill should avoid receiving Communion from the chalice.

Priests are encouraged to use good pastoral common sense to allay the fears of the faithful during cold and flu season. An example of this might include refraining from the use of the Sign of Peace during the celebration of Mass and reminding the faithful not to receive the Precious Blood if they are ill.

**CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS**

Additional information on Christian Initiation for adults can be found on the website for the Office for Divine Worship, under the heading *Christian Initiation*. You can find the most recent edition of the *Periodic Mailing* for Christian Initiation Coordinators here on the website.

**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION**

* **All Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are to have an appointment letter from the Archbishop.**
* Candidates are to be fully initiated practicing Catholics, high school graduates, validly married, if married, and recognized for faith and devotion to the Holy Eucharist as well as for service in the parish/institution.
* Pastors and chaplains are encouraged to send new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the archdiocesan formation sessions. Current Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are also welcome to these sessions.
* Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion typically serve for three years. Pastors/chaplains may renew terms, if agreeable and in consultation with the minister.
* Pastors and chaplains are reminded to inform the Office for Divine Worship if they conduct their own formation and to send to this office their request for new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.
* Request forms can be found on the Office for Divine Worship website. Letters of Appointment from the Archbishop will then follow.
* Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are appointed for a three-year term and for the place where they are commissioned. Terms may be renewed if agreeable to both the pastor/chaplain and the minister.
* All records of active Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are maintained by the parish/institution.
* **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are commissioned after participation in a training session, according to the form found in the *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 63, “Order for the Commissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.”**

• Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion only serve in the parishes/institutions for which they are commissioned.

**UPCOMING WORKSHOPS**

**All Workshops for 2015-2016**

**for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion**

**and for Lectors can be found on the website**

**of the Office for Divine Worship (www.odwphiladelphia.org)**

**PUBLICATION OF SUNDAY AND WEEKDAY READINGS**

**FOR THE PARISH WEBSITE AND THE PARISH BULLETIN**

Pastors are encouraged to publish aids for the Sunday and Weekday readings for Mass on the parish website and/or in the parish bulletin to foster a reading of the Word of God outside of Mass and also as a preparation for Mass. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops provides the following website which could be published:

<http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings>.

**links to helpful information**

**MAKE SURE YOUR PARISH RECEIVES THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION**

Please notify the Office for Divine Worship if there are any changes to the Coordinators serving as liaisons between your parish and the Office for Divine Worship. The Coordinators Contact Form is available online as a [PDF](http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Coordinator-Data-Collection-Form.pdf) or [Word](http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Coordinator-Data-Collection-Form.docx) file.

**FOR THE MOST RECENT NEWSLETTER FROM THE USCCB**

Individual issues of the Newsletter are posted online approximately three months after they have been released to subscribers. The most recent newsletter available is December 2014,

[*http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/newsletter/upload/newsletter-2014-04.pdf*](http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/newsletter/upload/newsletter-2014-04.pdf)*.*

For information on subscribing to the newsletter, visit:

[*http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/newsletter/*](http://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/newsletter/)*.*

**For past monthly mailings of the office for divine worship** visit:

[*http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/monthly-mailings/*](http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/monthly-mailings/)*.*