



# FROM THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP

## NOTES FOR JULY/AUGUST 2025

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### Saints in July—Saint Mary Magdalene; Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus

While they may not be holy days of obligation, there is one Feast and one Memorial in July that deserve some special attention:

#### **July 22—Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene**

In 2016, the Memorial of Saint Mary Magdalene was raised to a proper Feast. As with any Feast, the *Gloria* is sung at Mass, and the readings for the feast day take the place of the Ordinary Time readings. A proper Preface was approved for use in 2019, and is available on the “Worship” area of the diocesan website.

In the Office of Readings of the Liturgy of the Hours, the psalmody, verse, and First Reading with its Responsory are taken from the Common of Holy Women instead of the usual day; the *Te Deum* is also sung or said after the Second Reading with its Responsory. Funerals may be celebrated this day if needed.

#### **July 29—Memorial of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus**

On January 26, 2021, Pope Francis ordered the inscription of Saints Martha, Mary and Lazarus into the General Roman Calendar as an obligatory Memorial, to replace the existing celebration of Saint Martha alone. The proper liturgical texts were released by the Holy See in Latin, and the English translations were approved in 2024. While some of the existing texts have remained the same, others have been adjusted slightly or included for the first time. Liturgical guidelines for the celebration of Sts. Martha, Mary and Lazarus are available on the “Worship” area of the diocesan website. As with any Memorial, funerals may still be celebrated this day.

### Assumption of the BVM—Holy Day of Obligation or Not?

#### **Q. Is the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary a holy day of obligation this year?**

A. August 15 lands on a Friday in 2025. This means that the Assumption is a holy day of obligation. Only when it lands on a Saturday or a Monday is the obligation lifted. Do not forget to remind your congregations the weekends leading up to August 15 that it is a day of obligation.

Assumption is also one of the few days that does have proper prayers and readings for a vigil Mass the evening of August 14. Masses celebrated after 4 PM on August 14 would use the vigil Mass prayers and readings. And like any other holy day of obligation, funeral Masses are not celebrated this day. For the Liturgy of the Hours, Evening Prayer I of the Assumption is prayed on Thursday evening.

## Beginning the School Year in Prayer

Perhaps more than any other time, as the beginning of this school year approaches, it is right to look at starting with prayer. Here are a few suggestions from the resources of the Church:

- ✘ *Book of Blessings*—Chapter 5 provides an “Order for the Blessing of Students and Teachers,” which may be done both in and out of Mass. This could be done for the entire school or even by individual classes.
- ✘ *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*—Part V: Prayers for Catholic Living provides some simple prayers to start and end the school year, as well as a “Prayer for Students” and a “Prayer for Teachers.” There is also a simple “Blessing Before an Athletic Event” that may be helpful for coaches or parent volunteers.
- ✘ Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit—In many places it is customary to invoke the intercession of the Holy Spirit on the start of the academic year by celebrating a Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, or “Red Mass,” on a week-day that allows for a Votive Mass to be celebrated (check your *ordo*). Proper prayers for the Mass can be found in the *Missal* under Votive Masses, #9, The Holy Spirit; and readings can be found in the *Lectionary* at #1001.

## September 1—World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation & Labor Day

In 2015, [Pope Francis](#) called for an annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation every September 1, marking the beginning of the “Season of Creation,” which lasts through the Feast Day of Saint Francis of Assisi on October 4. The theme for this year is “Seeds of Peace and Hope.” Pope Leo’s message for 2025 along with other resources can be found at the [Care of Creation website](#).

Pope Leo also promulgated proper prayers for the celebration of a “Mass for the Care of Creation.” This is an addition to the Masses for Various Needs and Occasions in the *Roman Missal*. As is typical, the [Mass texts](#) were released in Latin and may be used in Latin immediately. The official English translation is forthcoming.

In addition, the USCCB has a [collection of resources](#) to help parishes and institutions celebrate this day dedicated to the care of God’s creation. Locally, the Office of Worship provides a [booklet](#) in connection with the annual Rogation Mass with “Prayers for Soil and Seed and Those Who Work the Land.”

In 2025, September 1 is also Labor Day. We give thanks to God for the gift of work, and we ask that he “give success to the work of our hands” (Psalm 90:17). Since there is no other feast day on September 1 that would take precedent, parishes may wish to consider celebrating Masses on Labor Day using the following texts:

- ✘ *Roman Missal*: Masses and Prayer for Various Needs and Occasions, II. For Civil Needs, #26 A or B, For the Sanctification of Human Labor
- ✘ *Lectionary*: #907-911, For the Blessing of Human Labor

## 2025 World Day of Prayer for Grandparents and the Elderly

In 2021, Pope Francis established the celebration of the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on the fourth Sunday of July, near the liturgical memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus (July 26). The theme for the 2025 celebration is “Blessed are those who have not lost hope” (cf. Sirach 14:2). The U.S. bishops have approved the transfer of the celebration in the U.S. to the first weekend after Labor Day (September 6-7) to coincide with National Grandparents (and the Elderly) Day in the United States, as many local communities, schools, and parishes have celebrated for some time.

For more information and resources on how to celebrate this day, please visit the [USCCB World Day for Grandparents and Elderly page](#).

## Catechetical Sunday 2025

This year, the Church will celebrate Catechetical Sunday on September 21, with the theme *Always be ready to give an explanation...for a reason for your hope* (1 Pet 3:15). Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each person plays, by virtue of Baptism, in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Those who the parish community has designated to serve as catechists may be called forth to be blessed for their ministry.

As in past years, a variety of materials have been prepared to assist clergy, parish catechists, Catholic school teachers, and the faithful to celebrate Catechetical Sunday. These can be found at the [USCCB Catechetical Sunday 2025 website](#).

In addition, chapter four of the *Book of Blessings* provides an “Order for the Blessing of Those Appointed as Catechists” that may be used in or outside of Mass. This could be used at the Masses Catechetical Sunday weekend to publicly recognize those who have made the commitment to serve as catechists, as well as giving the faithful of the community the opportunity to publicly pray for and support those entrusted with this great work.

Lastly, please do not forget to recognize parents as the first teachers of children. The role which they play is essential, and our prayerful support of them is greatly needed and appreciated.



## All Saints/All Souls in 2025

This year, the Solemnity of All Saints (November 1) lands on a Saturday. This means that **it is NOT a holy day of obligation in 2025**:

- ✘ Masses the evening of Friday, October 31, would be anticipatory Masses for All Saints (since there are not specific prayers/readings for a vigil for All Saints).
- ✘ For the Liturgy of the Hours on November 1, Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer II for All Saints are celebrated. However, for pastoral reasons, Evening Prayer II may be followed by Evening Prayer for the Dead.
- ✘ Since it is not a day of obligation, funeral Masses may be celebrated on November 1.
- ✘ The ordo also recommends the exposing of relics this day for veneration by the faithful, placing them in some location of honor this day (but not on the altar itself).

November 2 brings us the Commemoration of All Souls. Since it holds the special title of “commemoration,” it has its own set of rules:

- ✘ Priests are granted the privilege of celebrating three Masses—one for a particular intention, one for all the faithful departed, and one for the intentions of the Holy Father.
- ✘ Funeral Masses may be celebrated this day, but other ritual Masses may not.
- ✘ Masses the evening of November 1 would be anticipating All Souls.
- ✘ Since it is a Sunday, the Creed would be recited at Mass, but the Gloria is omitted.
- ✘ For the Liturgy of the Hours, the Office for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time is used, especially when prayed individually. In public celebrations of Morning or Evening Prayer, however, the Office of the Dead may be used.

Chapter 57 of the *Book of Blessings* provides an “Order for Visiting a Cemetery on All Souls Day” that can be used right after Mass or apart from the Mass. Remember to pray for the dead!

## Christmas Creep 2025, Jubilee Conclusion & Mary Mother of God 2026

“Christmas Creep” for 2025—December 25 will land on a Thursday this year. While the liturgical calendar is less crowded than it is some years, here are a few things to keep in mind in preparing:

- ✘ The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord begins after 4 PM on Wednesday, December 24. Masses after 4 PM would be for the Vigil of the Nativity.
- ✘ December 25 is always a holy day of obligation. Please remind your people in the weeks leading up to Christmas 2025 of that fact.
- ✘ Mass intentions—As is the case with any holy day of obligation, one of the Masses for Christmas must be said *pro populo* (“for the people”).

In 2026, January 1, the Solemnity of Mary the Holy Mother of God, is a Thursday, so it **will be** a holy day of obligation. Masses the evening of December 31 would be anticipatory Masses for the Solemnity. The Diocese of Evansville is under the patronage of Mary, Mother of God—pray for the local Church this day!

Lastly, the 2025 Jubilee concludes on the Feast of the Holy Family, Sunday, December 28, with Mass at the cathedral. Watch for more details as the date draws near.

## New Liturgical Bible and a *Liturgy of the Hours* Update

In a decree dated April 13, the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments confirmed a new English translation of the Old and New Testaments for liturgical use in the dioceses of the United States. A project first announced by the USCCB in 2012, the liturgical Bible includes three elements: the *New American Bible* Old Testament approved by the USCCB Administrative Committee in September 2010; *The Abbey Psalms and Canticles* confirmed by the then-Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on May 3, 2018; and the *New American Bible* New Testament, approved in September 2024.

Approved by the USCCB at its November 2024 plenary meeting, the liturgical Bible will be used in the *Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition* and a new edition of the *Lectionary for Mass*, while also being incorporated into other rituals.

The completion of this project has several implications:

- ✘ It was the last piece needed for the *Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition*. With this, the full manuscript has been sent to the Dicastery for Divine Worship for the confirmation process.
- ✘ It allows for a revision to the *Lectionary for Mass*, completed between 1998 and 2001. Many parishes are seeing their current lectionaries reach the end of the functional life and will be needing new books.
- ✘ It gives the Church a consistent set of English Scriptures across its various rituals. As it stands right now, the same Scripture may appear one way in the Liturgy of the Hours and slightly different in the Lectionary (not to mention the other ritual books that include the Scriptures used for their celebrations). With this the Scripture will sound the same no matter what book is used.

As far as timing, there is still a bit of waiting to do. Depending on how long the confirmation process takes, the USCCB is hopeful to see *Liturgy of the Hours, Second Edition* printed in 2027 or 2028. Of course, any delay in the confirmation pushes that timeline out even further. For the Lectionary revision, the process has only recently begun, so a new edition would still be several years away. No official estimate has been provided. However, it is a much less complicated project than the Liturgy of the Hours, which is helpful.

Lastly, while these projects are very important and it is good to see them coming to an end, they only impact the English versions of the various texts. Work is ongoing on a Spanish version of the Lectionary for the United States, but there is not any work currently being done on the Spanish Liturgy of the Hours.