

Winter Ordinary Time

Ordinary Time begins on Monday after the Baptism of the Lord and continues until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday inclusive.¹

Christian Unity Octave

World Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - January 18-25

The Week was originally begun in 1908 by the American Episcopalian clergyman Paul Wattson; who later became a Catholic and founded the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement in Graymoor, NY.

The Week begins on 18 January and ends on 25 January—the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul. Material for the Week of Prayer is prepared in collaboration by Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and The Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches.

The theme and text for each year's observance of the Week of Prayer are chosen and prepared by representatives of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and representatives of the World Council of Churches. The international texts are developed, adapted and published for use in the USA by the Graymoor Ecumenical & Interreligious Institute.

For more information, visit www.atonementfriars.org/week_of_prayer.htm

Suggested ideas for a Mass during the Unity Octave

The suggested psalm below, the readings in the Lectionary for Mass at 867–871, “For Christian Unity,” along with prayers from the *Sacramentary*, and hymns for unity might be used on appropriate weekdays during this week of special prayer.

Suggested Psalm for Christian Unity Ps 122

One of the “songs of ascent,” this psalm was prayed by pilgrims as they approach Jerusalem, going up the hill of the Temple Mount. Their prayer was for peace in this city that had known such division (and still does).

Con Qué Alegría/Let Us Go Rejoicing (Cortés)

I Rejoiced (Walker)

I Rejoiced When I Heard (Batastini/Gelineau)

I Rejoiced When I Heard Them Say (O’Carroll)

I Rejoiced When I Heard Them Say (Warner)

I Was Glad (Haas)

Let Us Go Rejoicing (Guimont)

Let Us Go Rejoicing (Hurd)

Let Us Go Rejoicing (Joncas)

Some suggested Christian Unity Songs

All Are Welcome (Haugen)

Anthem (Conry)

As a Fire Is Meant for Burning (Duck)

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race (Duck)

Father, We Thank Thee Who Has Planted

For the Healing of the Nations (Kaan)

In Christ There Is No East or West

The Church’s One Foundation

Ubi Caritas et Amor (Chant)

Ubi Caritas et Amor (Taizé)

¹ *General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar*, [hereafter GNLY] no. 44.

We Are Many Parts (Haugen)
Where Charity and Love Prevail

January 22/23 - National Day of Prayer

National Day of Prayer and Penance for violations against Human Dignity-January 22 or 23

"In all the dioceses of the United States of America, January 22 (or January 23, when January 22 falls on a Sunday) shall be observed as a particular day of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life. The Mass "For Peace and Justice" (no. 22 of the "Masses for Various Needs") should be celebrated with violet vestments as an appropriate liturgical observance for this day."²

Suggestions for a Mass for Penance

Lectionary #887-891

Some suggested Lectionary texts:

Isaiah 32:15-18 (887-2). The prophet's vision of a peaceful society is one built on right and justice.

Ps 72 (889-1)

In the reign of the ideal king, the lowly and the poor will find justice.

Every Nation on Earth (Joncas), Refrain II

Justice Shall Flourish (Cooney)

Justice Shall Flourish (Guimont)

Justice Shall Flourish (Schiavone)

Se Postrarán ante Ti/Every Nation upon Earth (Cortez), Respuesta II

or

Psalm 51

Philippians 4:6-9 (888-1). Paul offers a "household code"—a simple set of rules to live by. For the Christian, this code requires fidelity to truth, justice, beauty, and excellence.

Matthew 5:38-48 (891-2). This section of the Sermon on the Mount contains some of the most challenging moral prescriptions in the New Testament: Offer no resistance to one who is evil; pray for your persecutors. On this day, these texts point us toward practices that will make our penance effective and our defense of life successful.

Suggested Songs of Penitence

As a Fire Is Meant for Burning

Change Our Hearts

Forgive Our Sins

Lead Me, Guide Me

Remember Your Love

The Cry of the Poor

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

Catholic Schools Week

Catholic Schools Week - last week in January

Catholic Schools Week (CSW) is a joint project of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Individual dioceses and local Catholic elementary and secondary schools develop and promote their own CSW activities each year. Catholic Schools Week celebration became an annual event in 1974. Catholic Schools Week celebrates education that goes beyond preparation for a secular life -- it is education that prepares students for a Christian life. CSW also celebrates the high standards of excellence and the quality of the education available to all students in Catholic elementary and secondary schools across the U.S.

For more information visit: www.ncea.org/news/CatholicSchoolsWeek.asp

² General Instruction of the Roman Missal (USA edition), no. 373.

February 2 - Presentation of the Lord

This feast celebrates the fortieth day after Christmas—in the Eastern Churches it was celebrated on February 14, when it commemorated the fortieth day after Epiphany. That symbol of forty days is the reason for the feast's traditional importance and for its use as the time when candles are blessed for use in the churches (and in homes)—this was the 'Candle Mass' (Candlemas). In the middle ages, the feast became associated by farmers with predictions about the weather (if the sun shone on Candlemas and cast a shadow, then winter would continue; if it was cloudy and there was no shadow cast by the sun, then spring would come soon).³

On this day Christ's faithful people, with candles in their hands, go out to meet the Lord and to acclaim him with Simeon [and Anna], who recognized Christ as "a light to reveal God to the nations."⁴ As the *Rite of Baptism* says: *Receive the light of Christ. Parents and Godparents, this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly. This child of yours has been enlightened by Christ. He/she is to walk always as a child of the light. May he/she keep the flame of faith alive in his/her heart. When the Lord comes, may he/she go out to meet Him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom. All the faithful are called by their faithful lives to "cast off the works of darkness,"* (Rom. 13:12) for Jesus is "*the light shining in the darkness, and darkness could not overpower it*". (Jn. 1:5)

The candles kept by the faithful in their homes should be seen as a sign of Christ "the light of the world" and an expression of faith.⁵

Blessing of Candles and Procession

The entrance rite today is quite similar to the entrance rite for Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, except that on this feast members of the community carry candles instead of palms. The *Roman Missal* provides for a fully-formed procession, with the assembly and its ministers first gathering in a separate place before processing into the church. If the solemn entrance is used instead, the assembly gathers in the church as usual. The presider then greets the assembly and blesses the candles from the entrance of the church and then processes with the ministers to the altar, while all hold their lighted candles.

A song is sung at the very beginning of the liturgy, while the candles of the people are lit and while the ministers take their places either in a place apart from the church or at the church entrance. The antiphon provided in the Missal expresses our faith that God brings "light to the eyes of those who serve him well."

The same or another song may be used to accompany the procession of the assembly and/or the ministers into the church. The *Roman Missal* uses an antiphon that speaks of "a light of revelation to the nations," along with verses drawn from the Canticle of Simeon, which we hear proclaimed in today's Gospel.

After the members of the assembly and the ministers have taken their places, the Mass continues with the singing of the *Gloria*.⁶

³ National Association of Pastoral Musicians. *NPM Music Planning Calendar*. <http://www.npm.org/Planning/yearb/present.html>

⁴ CB, no. 241.

⁵ DPPL, no. 123.

⁶ National Association of Pastoral Musicians. *NPM Music Planning Calendar*. <http://www.npm.org/Planning/yearb/present.html>

World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life - February 2nd Feast of the Presentation of the Lord
***The US Bishops observe this on February 2 when that date falls on a Sunday; if not, it is observed on the Sunday after February 2.**

In *Vita Consecrata*, the 1996 Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Pope John Paul II wrote of the different forms of consecrated life as “the many branches which sink its roots into the Gospel and bring forth abundant fruit in every season of the Church’s life.” These diverse forms include: Monastic Life, the Orders of Virgins, Hermits, and Widows, Institutes completely devoted to contemplation, Apostolic Religious Life, Secular Institutes, Societies of Apostolic Life, and new or renewed forms of the consecrated life (cf. *Vita Consecrata*, 6-12).

Then, in 1997, Pope John Paul II established the World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life, to be observed on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (February 2). World Day for Prayer for Consecrated Life, “...is intended to help the entire Church to esteem ever more greatly the witness of those persons who have chosen to follow Christ by means of the practice of the evangelical counsels and, at the same time, is intended to be a suitable occasion for consecrated persons to renew their commitment and rekindle the fervor which should inspire their offering of themselves to the Lord.”

The late Holy Father wrote: “I trust that this World Day of prayer and reflection will help the *particular Churches* to treasure ever more the gift of consecrated life and to be measured by its message, to find the proper and fruitful balance between action and contemplation, between prayer and charity, and between commitment in the present time and eschatological hope.”

To read John Paul II's first message for this day, visit www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccsclife/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_06011997_i-consecrated-life-day_en.html

The National Coalition for Church Vocations (NCCV) sponsors and provides materials for World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life. For more information, visit www.nccv-vocations.org