

CHRISTMAS TIME SEASON

December 28, 2014

WHAT'S THIS?

Here are some interesting facts about Christmas Time (December 24 (evening), 2014 to January 11, 2015 which begins with the celebration of the birth of Jesus:

- The traditional color of Christmas Time is white with gold or silver, evoking the risen sun after the long pre-dawn twilight of Advent;
- The Christmas octave, a feast so important that we celebrate it for eight days, ends on January 1, the feast of Mary, the Holy Mother of God;
- The feast of Christmas lasts 12 days until the feast of the Epiphany;
- Christmas Time ends quietly with the Baptism of our Lord.

A virgin conceived. God became human. A promise was fulfilled. The world changed forever.

January 4, 2015

WHAT'S THIS?

The Feast of the Epiphany (celebrated either on January 6 or on the Sunday between January 2 and January 8) is also known as the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord and has several themes:

- We have the wise men being guided through darkness by the light of the star;
- We have the star as a sign that leads the wise men to Jesus;
- We have the manifestation of God pointing to the reality that Jesus came for all people;
- We have the mystery that God does reveal his very self in human flesh.

January 11, 2015

WHAT'S THIS?

The official end of Christmas Time is the Baptism of the Lord (the end of the octave of the Epiphany). This should not be confused with the Presentation of the Lord celebrated on February 2.

- This is the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord by John the Baptist in the Jordan River;
- When Jesus was baptized he heard a voice saying "You are my beloved; with you I am well pleased";
- Ordinary Time begins on Monday.

CHRISTMAS TIME SEASON

December 25, 2016

WHAT'S THIS?

Christmas Time

December 24 (evening) through January 9

Christmas in the liturgical year is more than a day. The liturgical year gives us the opportunity to **celebrate Christmas joy for sixteen days this year**. What a blessing this is when the day-to-day challenges of life often can lack in true joy and when we see the marketplace remove everything Christmas after the post-Christmas sales of December 26.

Some facts you should know about Christmas Time:

- The primary purpose of this season is to memorialize the Lord's birth
- Christmas Time also encompasses:
 1. Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
 2. Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
 3. Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
 4. Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
- The traditional color is white with gold or silver which are colors associated with joy in Christian liturgy
- The Gloria is reintroduced during Mass

This year the **Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph** is on Friday, December 30. It celebrates the unity and love so evident in the family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus. The example of Joseph's and Mary's faithfulness following God's call to bear his holy Son, Jesus, helps define our own discipleship.

A virgin conceived.

God became human.

A promise was fulfilled.

The world changed forever.

Excerpts taken from the 2017 Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons and weekdays.

January 1, 2017

WHAT'S THIS?

Christmas Time

December 24 (evening) through January 9

Today is:

- The **Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**
- The **Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord**
- A Holyday of Obligation.

We are still in the midst of Christmas Time, and today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. The use of the word "Solemnity" is not a statement about Mary's personality. It is a designation used for certain days within the liturgical (church-based) calendar of the Church. Solemnities are the highest rank of liturgical celebration, higher than a feast day or memorials. **By celebrating a solemnity dedicated to Mary's motherhood, the church highlights the significance of her part in the life of Jesus and emphasizes He is both human and divine.**

January is the Month of the Holy Name

Throughout the month of January, we give special honor to the name of Jesus. St. Paul wrote to the Philippians 2:10-11: *"At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* We hold the name of Jesus in special reverence. **The very name of Jesus is a prayer.**

Excerpts taken from the 2017 Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons and weekdays and Bustedhalo.com

CHRISTMAS TIME SEASON

January 8, 2017

WHAT'S THIS?

Christmas Time

December 24 (evening) through January 9

Today is the **Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord**.

Traditionally, two events in the life of Christ are remembered this week as manifestations of God's presence and action through Christ:

- The visit of the Magi
- The baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River

Epiphany Proclamation

While a day like Christmas is in our minds and on the calendars on December 25, many of the important feasts of the Church year move, based upon the date that Easter is set. In ancient times, before calendars were common, most people did not know the dates for the upcoming Liturgical year. On Epiphany Sunday, the upcoming dates were "proclaimed". After the Gospel, the Epiphany Proclamation is chanted from the ambo giving the moveable feasts of the current year. The Roman Missal suggests that if the Proclamation is not chanted, it should be omitted.

As the time of Christmas draws to a close, we sense the beginning of a new time in our journey through the liturgical year as we hear the stories of the first disciples.

The **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord** (January 9) closes the time of Christmas joy. It is the feast that proclaims the Baptism of Jesus by John as declared in Matthew 3:13-17. It is His baptism that elevates us to be sons and daughters of God. As disciples, we begin again this walk with Him *grounded in the joy and light of Christmas*.

Remember **January is the Month of the Holy Name – Jesus**

The very name of Jesus is a prayer.

Excerpts taken from the 2017 Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons and weekdays.

CHRISTMAS TIME SEASON

December 31, 2017

WHAT'S THIS?

THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS CONTINUED

The 12 Days of Christmas are now most famous as a song about someone receiving lots of presents from their "true love". The song, "The 12 Days of Christmas" is an English carol. From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era, wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the Church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember. The "True Love" one hears in the song is not a smitten boy or girlfriend but Jesus Christ, because truly Love was born on Christmas Day. The 12 Days of Christmas start on Christmas Day and last until the evening of January 5th. According to Ann Ball in her book, *Handbook of Catholic Sacraments*:

- Day 7 (December 31st): Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit – Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety and Fear of the Lord.
- Day 8 (January 1st): The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.
- Day 9 (January 2nd): Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. To fit the number scheme, the originator combined six fruits that were similar to make three. There are actually Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit. The fruit in the parenthesis are those that were not named separately – Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience (Forbearance), Goodness (Kindness), Mildness, Fidelity, Modesty and Continency (Chastity).
- Day 10 (January 3rd): The ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.
- Day 11 (January 4th): The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful Apostles.
- Day 12 (January 5th also known as Epiphany Eve): The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in The Apostles' Creed.

Original Source: Fr. Calvin Goodwin, FSSP, Nebraska – Printed with permission from Catholic Tradition.

January is the Month of the Holy Name - Jesus

Throughout the month of January, we give special honor to the name of Jesus. St. Paul wrote to the Philippians 2:10-11 " *At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*" We hold the name of Jesus in special reverence. **The very name of Jesus is a prayer.**

CHRISTMAS TIME SEASON

January 7, 2018

WHAT'S THIS?

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

The Epiphany of the Lord is celebrated on the first Sunday after New Year's Day. According to Webster's Dictionary – one of the meanings of *epiphany* is:

An intuitive grasp of reality through something (such as an event) usually simple and striking.

The Biblical account of the visit of the Magi from the East, which is so beautifully depicted in today's reading in Matthew 2:1-12, is such an "event".

Similarly, the Gospel readings for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord as found in Matthew 3, Mark 1 or Luke 3, depending on the church year celebrated, are the accounts of the Baptism of Jesus, as an adult, in the Jordan River. This Feast is usually celebrated on the Sunday after the Epiphany and concludes the Season of Christmas Time, however, because of the unusual way the calendar falls this liturgical year, this Feast is celebrated on Monday, January 8th.

Tuesday, January 9th, marks the beginning of Ordinary Time During Winter, which runs through February 13th.

Remember, January is the Month of the Holy Name – Jesus
The very name of Jesus is a prayer

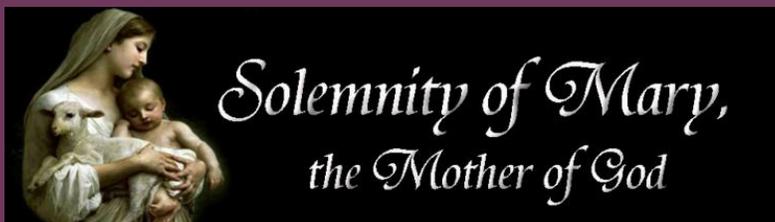
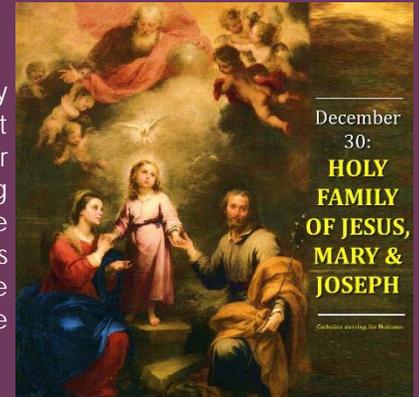
December 30, 2018

WHAT'S THIS?

Christmas Time - *December 24 (evening) through January 13*

December 31

Today is the **Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**. It is usually observed on the Sunday in the Octave of Christmas, which is the first eight days after Christmas and concludes on January 1. The Collect, the first prayer the Priest prays during Mass, holds in great esteem the Holy Family as a shining example to model our lives after. The Prayer over the Offerings also looks to the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph to intercede for all families to live "firmly in God's grace and His peace." The Preface I, II or III of the Nativity of the Lord may be used and the Prayer after Communion calls on the Church "to imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family."



January 1

January 1st is a Holy Day of Obligation, the **Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**. This solemnity is the most ancient liturgical observance of Mary in the Church's calendar. It honors Mary as the Mother of God, the title accorded her at the Council of Ephesus in 431.

As other Marian feasts entered the calendar,

January 1 acquired a different focus. The eighth day after birth was the traditional day for the circumcision and naming of a child.

CHRISTMAS TIME SEASON

January 6, 2019

WHAT'S THIS?

Christmas Time - December 24 (evening) through January 13

January 6th



Today is the feast of **The Epiphany of the Lord**. Today we celebrate that the child born in the darkness of night in a lowly manger is revealed as the manifestation (the meaning of *epiphany*) of God. Three events in the life of Christ are remembered today as manifestations of God's presence and action through Christ:

- The visit of the Magi
- The wedding feast of Cana
- The baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River

Epiphany Proclamation

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Excerpts taken from the 2017 and 2019 *Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons, and Weekdays*

CHRISTMAS TIME SEASON

January 13, 2019

WHAT'S THIS?

Christmas Time - December 24 (evening) through January 13

January 13th

Today is the feast of **The Baptism of the Lord** and is the official end of Christmas Time. It is the feast that proclaims the Baptism of Jesus by John as declared in Matthew 3:13-17 and should not be confused with the Presentation of the Lord celebrated on February 2. It is His baptism that elevates us to be sons and daughters of God. As disciples, we begin again this walk with Him *grounded in the joy and light of Christmas*.

- This is the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord by John the Baptist in the Jordan River;
- When Jesus was baptized he heard a voice saying "You are my beloved; with you I am well pleased";
- Ordinary Time During Winter begins on Monday.



Remember **January is the Month of the Holy Name – Jesus**
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Excerpts taken from the *2019 Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons, and Weekdays*