

# SYNAXIS

*Liturgical Newsletter / Bulletin liturgique*  
December – January 2021 - 2022 Décembre - Janvier

## **DON'T VIRTUALIZE THE CHURCH!**

The liturgical year has just ended. The Sunday following the Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe is already Advent, ushering us into the New Year. This Advent is special, marking the arrival in our country of the New Translation of the Roman Missal. A liturgical book that we are invited to embrace in order to enter into the understanding of the liturgy and to be worthy to participate in the Eucharist.

Participate, did you say? In person or virtually? Easy now, we are not questioning the value of participating in the liturgy virtually. This issue of **Synaxis**, our Liturgy Services liaison bulletin, is simply attempting to answer the following question from a correspondent: "What does the Church mean by *participating in the liturgy*? That particular subject will be the focus of this issue's Liturgical File, providing a fine opportunity to go back to the deliberations, still relevant today, of the Council Fathers.

With the word 'participation' still on everyone's lips, and particularly now as we embark upon the Synod on Synodality, **Synaxis** would like to present to our readers, in the section "Our Shepherd talks to us," a summary of the homily pronounced by Archbishop Christian Lépine at the Mass of October 17, 2021. A variety of rich liturgical resources is provided for your reference as you delve further into the topic in the Liturgical File section below. You can also use them to enrich your personal and community prayer, walking with the saints and the blessed whom we re-encounter through the Church during these two months.

Father Armand Ratolojanahary, curate of Notre-Dame-des-Sept-Douleurs Parish in Verdun, agreed to tell us about the impact of the liturgy on his life. As we await the arrival of our third French edition of the Roman Missal, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you a beautiful Advent Season and, in anticipation, a wonderful celebration at Christmas and the New Year.



Beda Kaji-Ngulu  
Director, *Liturgy Services*

# OUR SHEPHERD TALKS TO US



« To Be Missionary Disciples Together »

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpSqAwY6Ezg>

**Pope Francis invites us to participate in the Synod on synodality. He calls for a life review on how we are "together" missionary disciples. How do we do this together?**

## **Like Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ came for everyone. He called people. He gathered disciples. But he's always there for everyone. Whatever the horizon of the person, his origin, his membership.

Therefore, to be a disciple following Jesus Christ (personally) implies also to wonder how we are going to be together (communally) for everyone. How in our parishes, in our living environments, are we going to build bridges with others, other communities, other associations?

## **How to do it?**

What to do? A first step to take: meet, meet people! When you meet people, you begin by listening to them. In doing so, you meet them more and more, and end up discovering the people, their real life, beauty, sufferings and joys.

We know how to meet and listen individually, but we don't always know how we can do it as a Body, as the Body of Christ. This is where discernment comes into play.

Discernment? To discern is to learn to see what God calls me to when I discover the sufferings, the joys and the sorrows of the world and of the Church. What generosity does he call on me? What solidarity is he calling me to? What gesture does the Spirit cause in me?

## **Linking the diocesan project to the synodal process**

A synod was held here in Montreal at the end of the nineties. Recently, we launched the diocesan project. One question: how can we link this process to the synodal process?

A little reminder. The synodal process is declined in a three-thematic sequence: For a Church Communion - For a Church Participation - For a Church Mission.

To get involved, we have to pray together. We listen to each other and we listen to the calls of the Spirit. And we do two things.

First, a diagnosis of the quality of our "walking together". How are we together?

Then, to discern together the calls of the Spirit, to welcome his orientations for the future of our Church and of the world to which we are sent.

Concretely, we take the floor. We share it with the whole Church. First in a smaller group. And afterwards, in a large group. In doing so, we ask ourselves questions: What is the Spirit telling us today?

What step does he invite us to take in order to grow in our walk together? What orientations, what energies does he ask us to implement in different places for the life of the world?

### **Rooted in Jesus Christ**

Our diocesan transformation project continues on its way. It offers us a condensed approach through the statement of the vision of our diocese: "In Jesus Christ, let us build a life-giving Church that lets itself be evangelized, becomes close, makes itself welcoming and close to the world.

Together, we will combine this vision with the suggestions and lines of thought that come to us from Rome, taking care to also listen to the voice of the crowd, that is to say that of people who are less close and do not participate every day in the life of the Church.

Meetings organized in small groups, perhaps in a Zoom room or in the basement of the church will help us do this. Those who are tech-savvy will be able to take polls on the web, social media and church sites. Another way to contribute: organize an exit survey.

### **Participate as a family**

The pandemic has made us discover something: the importance of the family. Speaking of large or small groups, we want to bring together people from different backgrounds. And yet, the family already includes people who are different from each other. So maybe we can start by appealing to the family. A call to prepare something, to participate as a family.

And at the same time, we must not forget that there are people who are alone. If you are in this category, there might be someone you can join. Think between neighbors, if you know each other.

### **A call for humility and hope**

«In this synodal process, we follow the Lord, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The task is great. We are not in a process of success. We are in the process of fertility. It is God who is at work. It is Love that is at work. » So, let's hope.

Together, let us learn to bear witness to Jesus Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Let's learn to grow, taking one step at a time. « And with the Holy Spirit there will be fruit. There will be beautiful fruits. God is preparing for his Church beautiful fruits for this synodal process. »

## **LITURGICAL FILE**

### **Participating in the liturgy. What does the Church say?**

**These days, the term "participation" has taken on a broader significance than in the past. As creatures of the times, we talk more and more readily about participating 'in-person' or 'virtual participation' in the liturgy.**

Not in any way to pass judgment on virtual participation in the liturgy, made possible today thanks to the means of communication and social networks available, the following reflection is intended as a response to a question we were asked recently: What does the Church mean by participating in the liturgy?

#### **Let's not virtualize the Church!**

Here, to begin with, is a call recently voiced by Pope Francis: "Be careful not to virtualize the Church, the Sacraments, the people of God. The Church, the sacraments, the people of God are real. While it is true that, for the time being, we must maintain our familiarity with the Lord in this way, it is only to get us out of the tunnel, not to keep us there." These words still resonate for me today.

#### **What is participation?**

The dictionary defines it clearly. Participation is "the action of participating, taking part, contributing." When the Church speaks about participating in the liturgy, she goes further; let's look: "But in order that the liturgy may be able to produce its full effects, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their minds should be attuned to their voices, and that they should cooperate with divine grace lest they receive it in vain. Pastors of souls must therefore realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, something more is required than the mere observation of the laws governing valid and licit celebration; it is their duty also to ensure that the faithful take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects." (Sacrosanctum Concilium (**SC**), 11). It comes down to the disposition of those who participate in the liturgy.

The Church expects the faithful to be fully aware of their participation, actively engaged in and enriched by it. And this is not all. They are called to go beyond mere observance of a valid and lawful celebration and should have "proper dispositions" and "cooperate with divine grace." The Church is not talking about just the external attitude. Participation also takes place within and should be understood in more substantial terms, as coming from a greater consciousness of the mystery being celebrated and its relationship to daily life.

#### **Reinvigorating and instilling the faith**

The liturgical universe is full of different signs. They are its vocabulary. In order truly to enter into the liturgy, to live it and to receive the graces arising from it, it is important to decode these liturgical signs. Here, faith comes into play. Why? The reason is that the divine realities to which the liturgy gives us access are matters of faith; they belong to the mystery of faith. In fact, we can only grasp them through faith (Heb 11:1). Without faith, it becomes practically impossible to understand that everything we see has its origin in what we do not see (cf. Heb 11:3). Access to God, who is invisible, is only possible in and through the real humanity of Jesus Christ. Whoever has seen me has seen the Father, says Jesus. The Incarnation is not an illusion!

So we accept that faith transcends realities and sensory experience. It enables us to perceive the effective meaning of liturgical gestures and signs and to understand that they contain and transmit the saving power of God through the action of the Holy Spirit. In order to help the faithful to be enriched through their participation in the liturgy, the Church therefore rightly insists that they be enlightened by continuing mystagogy and formation enabling them to progress in their knowledge of the mystery being celebrated.

### **What can be done to promote participation?**

Our churches are becoming emptier all the time. Some are closed. The pandemic has been a factor. A priest told me quite recently: "I always tell them (my parishioners): If we come to Mass in our parish, the bishop will not close our church!" And we see it. Anxiety about the future is in the air, it is palpable. Is it going to close or not? We cannot stop there. The unnamed priest's words are an answer to the question, "What can be done to promote participation in the liturgy?"

Mother Church provides some guidelines. It is up to each of us to follow these guidelines in relation to the reality of our own respective parishes. To reflect the beauty and greatness of the Mystery celebrated in the liturgy, the Second Vatican Council wants our liturgies to be alive. The congregation is invited to take an active part in this. To achieve this, the acclamations of the faithful, their participation in the responses, the singing of the psalms, the antiphons and hymns, as well as the actions and gestures and posture should be fostered. And a devout silence should be observed at all times (**SC**), 30.31.

This, of course, is the silence that accompanies conscious attention and encourages contemplation. Such silence is pre-eminently inward but expressive of a calm and quiet heart. An outward silence is also demanded, requiring those who take part in the liturgical celebration to prepare themselves. Similarly, this silence also requires that the celebration be coordinated in advance and thus

unfold in an orderly fashion, without improvisation. In addition, a moment of prayer and meditation is highly recommended to mark the transition from daily occupations to the entrance into a sacred celebration.

### **Each according to his function**

Participation in the liturgy does not take place in a solely individual dimension; it is also communal and should be guided by this principle: " In liturgical celebrations each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy (**SC**), 28." Ordained minister, lay faithful, all have a role to play. Several ministries are called upon.

First, there are the ordained ministers. They are truly essential. They must be neither hurried nor distracted. Nor should their liturgical gestures and actions be carried out mechanically. Filled with and inhabited by the presence of God not visible to our eyes, ordained ministers have the great responsibility of manifesting this Mystery physically through the rite as it is being celebrated. Respect for the rite thus underlies participation in the liturgy.

A word concerning unordained ministries - "altar servers, Schola cantorum, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, commentators, sacristans and masters of ceremonies" - these persons must have prepared themselves carefully, from both the spiritual and the liturgical point of view. They must be abreast of the protocols governing the ceremonies and ensuring that the celebration is carried out in an orderly and spiritually inspired fashion. If you would like to explore the subject of participation further, the following are some resources to consult:

- [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19631204\\_sacrosanctum-concilium\\_fr.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_fr.html)
- [https://www.cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/234-vetc\\_hiver\\_2018.pdf](https://www.cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/234-vetc_hiver_2018.pdf)
- <https://diocese64.org/actualites/item/346-la-participation-active-a-la-liturgie-par-mgr-marc-aillet>
- <https://liturgie.catholique.fr/accueil/espace-et-acteurs/participation-acteurs-celebration/5456-la-participation-active-des-fideles-durant-la-messe/>

# PRAYER INTENTION OF THE HOLY FATHER

December 2021



## For evangelization - *Catechists*

Let us pray for the catechists, called to proclaim the word of God: may they bear witness to it with courage and creativity, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[Lay ministry on Catechist](#)

[Video: Pope on Catechist](#)

## OBLIGATORY MEMORIALS... AND FEASTS

**Friday, December 3**

**St. Francis Xavier († 1552)**

Obligatory memorial. Jesuit missionary, evangelizer of the Indies, he was one of the first companions of Saint Ignatius in Paris. He was born in 1506 in the castle of Xavier in Navarre not far from Pamplona and was canonized in 1622. Driven by his fervour to spread the Gospel, he wore himself out proclaiming Christ to numberless peoples in India, on the Moluccas and other islands, and thence to Japan, where he converted many to the faith. In the end, consumed by illness and work, he died on Shangchuan Island off the coast of China in 1552.

**Tuesday, December 7**

**St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church († 397)**

Obligatory memorial. Bishop of Milan and Doctor of the Church. He fell asleep in the Lord on April 4, 397, the holy night of Easter, but he is honored mainly on December 7 when, while still a catechumen, he was called to govern that illustrious see in 374 while serving as prefect of the city. A true pastor and doctor to the faithful, he applied the greatest energy to practising charity towards all, defending the freedom of the Church and proclaiming the doctrine of the true faith against the Arians while teaching piety to the people through his commentaries on the Bible and the hymns he composed. With his celebrated personality and his renown as a lawyer, he was made governor of the province of Milan. It was then that he discovered Jesus Christ. While still only a catechumen passing through his city, he was elected bishop by acclamation of the people. He was immediately baptized, ordained a priest and in a short time consecrated a bishop. St. Ambrose was a true bishop, promoting social peace and the correctness of the faith.

**Wednesday, December 8**

**Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary**

Solemnity. Since time immemorial, the Eastern Churches have celebrated the original purity of Mary at the feast of "the Conception of the Holy Mother of God"



or, more precisely, the feast of the conception of Mary in the womb of St. Anne. Truly favoured with grace and blessed among all women, she was kept free from all stain of original sin from the first moment of her conception by a singular privilege from God in anticipation of the salvific birth and death of the Son of God. This dogma, handed down by very ancient tradition, was formally defined on this day in 1854 by Blessed Pius IX.

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One year ago, on the 150th anniversary of the declaration of [St. Joseph](#) as patron of the universal Church, Pope Francis announced a year dedicated to St. Joseph

St. Joseph, Teacher of the interior life,

teach us to live in daily intimacy with Jesus and Mary and in trusting surrender to the love of God the Father.

St. Joseph, protector of the family of Nazareth,  
we entrust the future of our families to you.

May they be dwelling-places of love.

Help us in the Christian education of our children.

St. Joseph, model to workers,  
we entrust our daily work to you,

that it may contribute to the welfare of human beings.

Help us to do this work in a spirit of service.

We pray to you for all those seeking work.

St. Joseph, faithful guardian of the Church, to whom God has entrusted the safeguard of the mysteries of salvation, inspire Christians to be faithful witnesses of the Gospel, at all times and in all places, in the midst of a world so painfully in search of brotherhood and peace. Amen!

[Addition of seven new invocations to the Litany of St. Joseph in this year dedicated to him.](#)

### Thursday, December 9

#### St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin († 1548)

Optional memorial. "Cuauhtlatoatzin" (Talking Eagle) was born in Cuautlitlán, a district of present-day Mexico City He belonged to the Chichimeca tribe. Little is known of his life before his conversion and baptism at the age of 50 by one of the first Franciscan priests to arrive in Mexico. Canonized on July 31, 2002, in John Paul II's homily at that celebration, St. Juan was an Indigenous man of very pure, humble and fervent faith. He had a sanctuary built on the hill of Tepeyac near Mexico City, where the Virgin Mary had appeared to him and where he was laid to rest circa 1548.



Opening prayer: *Lord our God, through St. Juan Diego you have shown the tenderness of the Blessed Virgin Mary towards your people; grant us, through her intercession, to always fulfill your will by following the exhortations of our heavenly Mother. Through Jesus Christ. Ordo 2021-2022*

**Friday, December 10**  
**Our Blessed Lady of Loreto**

New optional memorial. Patron saint of air travellers [Litanies of Loreto](#)  
Opening prayer: Lord God, in fulfilment of the promise made to our fathers, you chose the Virgin Mary, daughter of Sion, to be the mother of the Saviour; help us to follow the example of her humility, which was pleasing to you, and of her obedience, for which gift we are thankful. Through Jesus Christ. *Ordo 2021-2022*

**Sunday, December 12**  
**Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples**

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**Community Celebration of Reconciliation**

This week, it is recommended that a communal celebration of Reconciliation be held in every parish and community. This celebration will confirm the community's desire to welcome the coming Lord. *Ordo 2021-2022*

**Monday, December 13**  
**Saint Lucy, virgin and martyr († c. 305)**

Obligatory memorial. Her very name evokes light, but her life remains in shadow. While she lived, she kept her lamp lit to go out and meet the Bridegroom and then, having been led to die for Christ, she was worthy to enter with Him into the wedding banquet and to possess the light that does not die.

**Tuesday, December 14**  
**Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church († 1591)**

Obligatory memory. Juan was born to a poor family in Old Castile. He was very young when his father died. His mother had to work as a nanny. To pay for his studies, he worked as a nurse in the city hospital. At the age of 21, he decided to enter the Carmelite Fathers, and his superiors sent him to the University of Salamanca. On the advice of St. Teresa of Jesus, he was the first among his brethren to undertake the reform of the Carmelite Order, he supported through countless works and harsh tribulations. According to his writings, seeking to live a life hidden life in Christ and consumed by the flame of God's love, he completed his ascent to God through a dark night and fell, asleep in the Lord in Ubéda, Spain, in 1591.

"The weekdays from 17 December up to and including 24 December are ordered in a more direct way to preparing for the Nativity of the Lord."

*Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year, no. 42*

**Friday December 24**  
**Solemn Mass on the Eve of the Nativity of the Lord (1st Century)**

**Saturday December 25**  
**Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (1st Century)**

Today we celebrate the birth in Bethlehem of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Son of God, conceived in the flesh by the working of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the ever Virgin Mary. "Immanuel", "God with us", is the prophetic name that Jesus received from Isaiah (7:14). That is why today we celebrate all those who bear the name Emmanuelle, Emmanuel, Manuela, Manuel...

**Mass at Midnight (8 pm - midnight) / Mass at Dawn (6 am - noon) /  
Mass during the Day (10 am - 8 pm)**

**Sunday, December 26**  
**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (1st Century)**

Feast. On the Sunday after Christmas (or on December 30 if Christmas falls on a Sunday) is the celebration of), the Holy Family : Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the model of family life for Christians for Christians.

The feast was not extended to the universal Church until 1921, since it had only recently (15th century) originated with the veneration of St. Joseph. Then, beginning with the veneration of the Holy Parents of Christ in the 16th and 17th centuries, there developed a recognition of the important social function of Christian families and of the work of sanctification that they perform.

**Monday, December 27**

St. John, Apostle and Evangelist († 101)

Feast. John was young. His love for Christ was great, and he believed that Christ's love was even greater. Therefore, he called himself, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He became one of the small group amid the faithful. He was present on Mount Tabor at the Transfiguration, he was at the Last Supper, by Jesus' side, and at Calvary, the sole apostle at the foot of the cross. It was here that Jesus entrusted his mother Mary to him.

Son of Zebedee, he was one of the first to be called by the Lord. In the Gospel and in the letters that bear his name, he is presented as the theologian who contemplated the glory of the Word Incarnate and proclaimed his vision.

**Tuesday, December 28**  
**The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (1st Century)**

Feast. Little children who were massacred in Bethlehem in Judea by order of the wicked King Herod, so that the infant Jesus would be put to death along with them. From the earliest ages of the Church they were honoured as martyrs, being the first fruits of all those who were to shed their blood for God and for the Lamb of God.

**Friday, December 31**  
**Seventh day in the Octave of the Nativity**  
**Anticipated Mass for the Solemnity of St. Mary, Mother of God**

Just as the celebration of Sunday Mass may be scheduled on Saturday from 4:00 p.m. onwards,, the Solemnity of St. Mary, Mother of God, is to be celebrated this day from the same time, if a Mass is scheduled. *Ordo 2021-2022*

**PRAYER INTENTION OF THE HOLY FATHER**

**January 2022**

***Educating in fraternity***



We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

**New Year's Day Blessing**  
**Saturday, January 1**

One of our beautiful traditions blessing of children by their parents on the first day of the New Year: a uniquely touching and noble gesture with a sacred character. Raising one hand over their children or making the sign of the cross over them, the parents say:

*Lord, giver of all life, we give you thanks for the love with which you have filled our hearts. We thank you for our children. We thank you for N., N.; keep them in your joy and in your peace. May they grow up happy and healthy. May the same love unite us and make our house a welcoming home. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. R/Amen.*

Or

*My children, when you came into the world, your presence changed our lives. You have been our joy, our pride and, our hope. Your sorrows hurt us. Your pain was our pain. Your fears were our fears. In this New Year we thank the Lord for your birth, for your life, for your presence. May our road be long and beautiful. May light be all around you. May joy be with you. And may the Lord bless you now and forever. R/Amen. André Beauchamp Ordo 2021-2022*

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**World Day of Peace**

The theme of peace can be emphasized in the homily, a prayer for peace may be offered among the prayers of the faithful, and the exchange of the sign of peace preceding Communion could also be emphasized. On this first day of the New Year, it would also be good to encourage fathers and mothers to bless their children at home. *Ordo 2021-2022*

## **St. Mary, Mother of God, Octave of the Nativity (1st Century)**

Solemnity. Eight days after the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we honour his Mother who gave him his human being, body and soul, by the Holy Spirit who overshadowed her and brought her into the sphere of the heavenly Father. Designated January 1 by the ancient custom of the liturgy of Rome, it is intended to celebrate Mary's part in the mystery of salvation and to exalt the special dignity which derives from it for the "most holy Mother... through whom we were found worthy to receive the Author of life". *Ordo 2021-2022*

## **January 2 to 9, 2022, inclusive - Christmas Time Office**

### **Sunday, January 2 Epiphany of the Lord**

Solemnity. The feast of the Epiphany puts into perspective the universal character of the mystery of salvation as proclaimed to the Gentiles from the Old Testament down to us. Like the Magi, "we saw his star in the east and came to worship Him" (Mt 2:2). May this feast of the Epiphany shed on us the true Light which shines from the face of Christ, full of mercy and faithfulness. Amen!

### **Monday, January 3 Holy Name of Jesus**

Optional memorial. Opening prayer: *Lord God, in your Word made flesh you founded the salvation of the human family race: grant those who belong to you the mercy they implore, so that all may recognize the only Name to be invoked, that of your only Son. Him who reigns.*

### **Tuesday, January 7 St. André Bessette, religious (+ 1937)**

Obligatory memorial. St. Brother André was a witness to God's kindness, a religious of the Congregation of Holy Cross, builder of St. Joseph's Oratory of Mount Royal, Montreal, the celebrated shrine constructed to St. Joseph. He was beatified on May 23, 1982 and canonized on October 17, 2010. Opening prayer: *Lord God, friend of the humble, you awakened in your servant, St. André Bessette, a great devotion to St. Joseph and a singular dedication to the poor and the afflicted. Grant us, through his intercession, to follow his example of prayer and charity, so that we too may arrive at the splendour of your glory. Through Jesus Christ.*

### **Sunday, January 9 Baptism of the Lord**

Feast. This solemnity concludes the Christmas season. And, in a way, it serves to embrace us more fully in the Mystery of the Incarnation which we celebrated on Christmas night and entered further into with the feast of the Epiphany. May the Lord grant us, therefore, to live our baptism in harmony with his own baptism; may he grant that we may be constantly attentive to Him so that, like Him, we may become sons and daughters in whom God our Father can be fully pleased!

## Return to Ordinary Time

Ordinary Time consists of the 33 or 34 weeks in which no particular aspect of the Mystery of Christ is celebrated. Instead, we commemorate the Mystery of Christ in its very fullness, especially on Sundays. On the first day of each week, called the Lord's Day or Sunday in keeping with an apostolic tradition dating back to the resurrection of Christ, the Church celebrates the Paschal Mystery, and hence Sunday is to be considered the paramount feast day. *Ordo 2021-2022*

### Wednesday, January 12

#### St. Marguerite Bourgeoys, virgin († 1700)

Obligatory memorial. In Montreal, Quebec, in 1700, St. Marguerite Bourgeoys, a virgin who assisted colonists and soldiers in a great many ways and took especial care of the Christian education of young girls, for whom she founded the *Congrégation de Notre-Dame*.

Opening prayer. *Father, you called St. Marguerite Bourgeoys to leave her country for the sake of her faith and to train youth in the Christian life. Let us, in following her example and her prayers, proclaim by our words and our deeds, by all the roads that lead to You, the presence and the love of the Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, Who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.*

### Monday, January 17

#### St. Anthony, abbot († 356)

Obligatory memorial. After the death of his parents, embracing the teachings of the Gospel, he gave all that he owned to the poor and retired to the solitude of The Thebaid in Egypt, where he entered upon a life of asceticism. He worked zealously to strengthen the Church by helping those who professed the faith under Diocletian's persecution and by supporting St. Athanasius against the Arians. He had so many disciples that he is called the father of monks.

### From Tuesday, January 18 to Tuesday January 25

#### Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an international Christian ecumenical event held each year around Pentecost in the Southern Hemisphere and from January 18 to 25 in the Northern Hemisphere.

Up until Paul's conversion, we have the option of celebrating Mass daily in the name of Christian unity throughout this week. [International brochure](#) and [materials for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#).



## **Friday, January 21**

### **St. Agnes, virgin and martyr († c. 304)**

Obligatory memorial. In Rome at the beginning of the fourth century, while still a young girl, she offered up the supreme testimony of her faith, consecrating her chastity by martyrdom and triumphing over both her youth and the tyrant. In doing so, she earned the general acclamation of the people and won even greater glory from God.

## **Sunday, January 23**

### **Sunday of the Word of God (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time)**

This is a good opportunity to reflect on the focal place of the Word of God in catechesis: it is God himself who reveals himself in Christ, the Word made flesh, and through the Holy Spirit. As the Word of God during Ordinary Time, the Pope invites the baptized and Christian communities to extend this day with renewed study of Sacred Scripture, in which God's dialog with his people never ceases. The General Directory for Catechesis reminds us that "the transmission of the Gospel according to the Lord's command has been accomplished in two ways: "by the living transmission of the Word of God (called simply Tradition) and by Sacred Scripture (Old Testament and New Testament), which is the same proclamation of salvation, recorded in writing." Thus, Tradition and Sacred Scripture are closely united and interwoven, deriving from one source: the Revelation of Jesus Christ" DpC #25. This is one of the major teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

## **Monday January 24**

### **St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and Doctor of the Church († 1622)**

Obligatory memorial. Bishop of Geneva and Doctor of the Church. A true shepherd of souls, he brought into the Catholic communion a great number of brothers who had become estranged from it. Through his writings, he taught Christians devotion and the love of God. Together with St. Jane Frances de Chantal, founded the Order of the Visitation of Holy Mary. While living in humble circumstances in Lyon, he surrendered his soul to God on December 28, 1622 and was laid to rest one year to the day in Annecy in 1623.

## **Tuesday January 25**

### **Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle**

Feast. Paul was on the road to Damascus, possessed by a murderous rage against the Lord's disciples, when Jesus revealed himself in his glory and elected him to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to proclaim the Gospel of salvation among the nations, and in doing so he suffered much for the sake of Christ.

End of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,  
Yesterday was the final day to celebrate Mass in connection with this cause.

**Wednesday, January 26**  
**Sts. Timothy and Titus, Bishops (First Century)**

Obligatory memorial. Disciples and companions of St. Paul. Timothy, called by Paul "his true son in the faith", was born in Asia Minor to a Greek father and a Jewish mother. Having been converted during St. Paul's first mission, Timothy became his disciple and faithful helper. In order to facilitate his acceptance among the Jews and Judeo-Christians, Paul had him circumcised. Timothy was imprisoned alongside Paul, and, and during his second imprisonment, Paul asked again for him.

Titus was a converted but uncircumcised Greek. He as an able diplomat to whom Paul entrusted sensitive missions, all the while demanding that he be firm and unequivocal. He brought peace to the Corinthians and organized the nascent communities of Crete.

**Friday, January 28**

**St. Thomas Aquinas, priest and doctor of the Church († 1274)**

Obligatory memorial. A priest of the Order of Preachers and Doctor of the Church, endowed with the highest intellectual qualities, he transmitted his eminent wisdom to others through his prayers and writings. Called by the Pope himself, the Blessed Gregory X, to the Second General Council of Lyons, he was on his way when he died in the monastery of Fossanova in Lazio, March 7, 1274. Many years later, in 1369, his remains were removed to Toulouse on January 28.

**Monday January 31**

**St. John Bosco, priest († 1888)**

Obligatory memorial. His troubled childhood was spent in poverty and, once ordained, he poured all his energy into educating the young people of Turin. He founded the St. Francis de Sales Association and also, with the help of St. Mary Domenica Mazzarello, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, teaching young people a trade and instructing them in the Christian life. After successfully carrying out so many projects, he died in Turin in 1888.



## ***DON'T MISS THESE DATES!***

The virtual [Diocesan Liturgical Paschal Mystery Session 2022 Session liturgique diocésaine Mystère Pascal](#) will be held Tuesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 from 7 p.m. till 8:30 p.m. If by then, in-person meeting is possible, you will be notified in due time. Link: [Liturgical Paschal Mystery Session 2022 Session liturgique Mystère Pascal](#).

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[Canadian Bishops](#) invite Residential School Survivors, Indigenous elders, knowledge keepers and Indigenous youth to meet with Pope Francis at the Vatican, December 17-20, 2021.

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Canadian Bishops will welcome [Pope Francis to Canada](#) for a historic pilgrimage of healing and reconciliation.

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Originally scheduled for 2022, the [next Synod assembly](#) has been postponed for one year due to the coronavirus pandemic. The purpose of Synodality is to discern together calls of the Holy Spirit for the Church today.

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New [French translation](#) of the Roman Missal will be In effect as of Sunday, November 28, 2021 (first Sunday of Advent), and officially on Sunday, March 6, 2022 (first Sunday of Lent)

## **PERSONAL TESTIMONIAL**

I am Armand Ratolojanahary, and I am from Madagascar. I am a Trinitarian religious. I was ordained a priest on May 28, 2016. I received the faith in my childhood, as a gift and a grace from the Lord through my parents. I can say that the liturgy has a very important role in my life. It has shaped me, helping me to achieve my goals of praising, worshipping and praying to the Lord, and especially of dedicating my life to Him.

For me, the liturgy is the praise offered up by men and women to their Creator, like a heartfelt cry in dedication of their day. It is a practice that is neither obligatory nor compelled, much less a performance: but rather a spiritual adventure that involves the person and allows him or her to begin to move and to be led to Jesus Christ.

As a priest-religious, I live with my brothers in community. I find joy in taking part in the prayers we pray together, such as lauds, meditation, the rosary, trisagion (a prayer in worship and veneration of the Holy Trinity), vespers and compline; but I love and dare to say that adoration and celebration of the Eucharist move me deeply and have a great impact on my life.

During my time in Montreal, my appreciation has grown through the testimonies of the parishioners who attend my celebrations. I am aware of their understanding through their comments and statements.

In conclusion, for me personally, the liturgy is my life. It is something to be prepared in order to help and inspire us in prayer and praise for the Lord.

# ON THE ARCHBISHOP'S AGENDA

**2021**

**Thursday December 2 at 7 p.m.**

*Mass, Consecration of the Grand Séminaire de l'Archidiocèse of Montreal to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Venue to be confirmed*

**Tuesday, December 7 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

*Retreat with cultural communities (no mass) at Notre-Dame-de-l'Amour-Divin parish, 765 Roland-Forget Street, Laval*

**Saturday, December 11 at 11 a.m.**

*Mass, 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Mission Mère-des-Chrétiens (in Italian), 7935 Lefebvre Street, Montreal*

**at 11 p.m.**

*Mass, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral*

**Monday, December 13 at 7:30 p.m.**

*Mass, Rosa Mystica at Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral*

**Friday, December 24 at 2:30 p.m.**

*Christmas Mass, Maison du Père at the Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes Chapel, 1280 Berri Street, Montreal*

**at midnight**

*Christmas Mass at Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral*

**Sunday, December 26 at 9:30 a.m.**

*Mass at Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral*

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**2022**

**Saturday, January 1 at 9:30 a.m.**

*Mass at Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral*

**Sunday, January 2 at 9:30 a.m.**

*Mass at the Mary, Queen of the World Cathedral*

**Sunday, January 23 at 3 p.m.**

*Ecumenical liturgy (no mass) at the Armenian Apostolic Church, 615 Stuart Avenue, Outremont*

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