



Advent

The liturgical or Christian Year begins with Advent. The purpose of Advent is twofold. One is to anticipate and prepare for the coming birth of Christ and the other is to celebrate the expectation of Christ's return. Advent begins on the Sunday falling closest to November 30 and continues (for four weeks) until Christmas.

Christmas

The Christmas season in which the birth of Christ is celebrated begins on Christmas Day (December 25) and continues for twelve days.

Epiphany

January 6 is Epiphany Day. The story of the Magi is often associated with the Epiphany season which celebrates the revelation of God to the world through Jesus Christ. Epiphany season (also referred to as Ordinary Time) lasts until the Tuesday before Lent.

Lent

The Lenten season has been referred to as the "springtime" of the church. It was traditionally the period of time when Christian converts would prepare for baptism. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts forty days (excluding Sundays) ending on Easter Eve. It is a period of reflection and repentance in preparation for Easter.

Holy Week

The events of Holy Week take place at the end of the Lenten Season:

Palm/Passion Sunday- The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

Maundy Thursday- The remembrance of the Last Supper and the commandment to love and serve one another.

Good Friday- Remembering the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross.

Holy Saturday- observed as a day of fasting and reflection on Jesus in the tomb.

Easter

Easter Day begins the fifty day Easter season in which the church celebrates the resurrection of Christ. The date of Easter fluctuates on or between March 21 and April 25. It is observed the first Sunday after the first full moon falling on or after March 21. During Easter, Christians celebrate Christ's resurrection and his victory over sin and death.

Pentecost

The Day of Pentecost is fifty days past Easter. It is the day on which the church recognizes the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter and Counselor sent by Christ to the early disciples and to the church.

Ordinary Time

The period of time following the Day of Pentecost until Advent, or Ordinary Time is also referred to as the Season of Pentecost. The term Ordinary Time refers to the absence of Holy or Feast Days during this period.

The liturgical or Christian calendar does more than mark the events of the life and ministry of Jesus. While the Christmas and Easter seasons help the church remember and celebrate the life of Jesus, Ordinary Time provides occasion to focus on the life of the church as a season of growth, discipleship and Christian formation. The observance of seasons and events according to the liturgical calendar offers Christians the opportunity to celebrate in Christian community, reflect on their discipleship, grow in spiritual formation, and become more fully aligned with Christian faith and mission.

Creative and informed use of liturgical color aids in the observance of the Christian calendar, unites congregations with the greater Christian community, and adds beauty to the worship space.

Although there are some variations for feast days and ordinances the following list represents the customary use of liturgical colors:

White- for purity and holiness is used at Christmas and Easter.

Red- symbolizes the Holy Spirit and is the color displayed at Pentecost.

Purple- the color of preparation or penitence is used during Advent and Lent.

Green- symbolizing growth is used during Ordinary Time to signify the spiritual growth of the church.

Gold- representing joy is displayed with white at Christmas and Epiphany, and Easter.

Blue- symbolizes hope and may be substituted for purple during Advent.

Black (Gray) - the color of mourning, may be used on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (although all liturgical color and decorations are traditionally removed for Good Friday).