

Third Grade: Lesson 15

Seasons of the Church and Holy Days

Lesson Objective:

In light of everything that they learned about the Church, this lesson aims to help children gain a better appreciation of how the cycle of the liturgical year can help them grow in their faith. In addition, this lesson helps the children understand that different cultures have different customs and liturgical celebrations. It is important to make the connection that going to church isn't just something we do, but a way that we can continue to encounter Christ and be nourished and strengthened in our faith.

Learning Outcomes: Students will ...

- Identify the seasons of the Church year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Triduum, Easter, and Ordinary Time.
- Describe the vestments, sacred objects, and various colors used in the celebration of the Liturgy.
- Discuss the various cultural expressions that may take place within the celebration of the Mass (music, art, local customs, etc.)
- List the Holy Days of Obligation and explain the purpose for each celebration.

Materials Needed:

- Prayer space items, Bible, pencils, crayons and or colored pencils
- Copies: One of the opening of class coloring pages (optional), liturgical calendar, Immaculate Conception information sheet

As Students Enter Class:

- It is a good idea to have something for students to work on while they wait for everyone to arrive and for class to begin.
- Ideas: Stained class cross for students to color; this could take up to two class sessions and will make a nice display. Another idea is to color a picture about one of our Holy Days of Obligation, such as the Ascension of our Lord.
- [Stained class cross coloring page](#)
- [Ascension of our Lord Coloring Page](#)

Beginning of Class:

- Gather around your prayer space and pray the Our Father.

Lesson Order	Implementation Ideas
<p>Lesson 15 Video</p> <p>This lesson contains many quick videos. It contains information on the Church's Liturgical Season, celebrations, and Holy Days of Obligation.</p> <p>Students will revisit these concepts in greater detail in Fourth Grade.</p> <p>Provide discussion and reflection as often as you feel it is needed. Consider tossing a bean bag, ball, or small object to a student when you ask a question. This can help keep students engaged and focused.</p>	<p>This video is 1:19 in length.</p> <p>Highlights: The cycle in our Liturgical Year can help you grow in your faith. Each Church season helps us grow, prepare, or celebrate our faith.</p> <p>For example, ordinary time is marked with the color green and is a season of growth in our faith.</p> <p>Purple is the color for Advent and Lent and are seasons of preparation.</p> <p>White is the color of feasts, Christmas and Easter (seasons of celebrations).</p> <p>Red is the color for Pentecost and stands for the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Holy days of obligation help us grow deeper in our faith and relationship with God as well. In today's lesson, we will learn more about the Liturgical calendar and Holy Days of Obligation.</p>
Ordinary Time	<p>This video is 4:12 in length but ends at 4:00.</p> <p>Highlights: This video has a beautiful message: Jesus wants us to walk with Him, through His story, the Bible story, and through our story.</p> <p>Have you ever wondered what Jesus would say to his Apostles while they were walking or sitting around a campfire? In Luke's Gospel, on the day of the Resurrection, there is a story about how two of Jesus's Disciples are walking on the road to Emmaus and Jesus comes up to them in disguise. Jesus begins to explain to them all that was written about Him in scripture. Like the disciples walking with Jesus on that road, during ordinary time we walk with Jesus. We allow Him</p>

	<p>to walk with us in the journey of our lives, to share with us His story of the Bible.</p>
Advent in Two Minutes	<p>This video is 2:00 minutes in length 😊</p> <p>Please note it is not narrated. Music plays in the background while words appear on the screen. The words move quickly and this is an engaging video.</p> <p>Suggestion: Try to read each slide out loud as best you can, without stopping and starting. Save that for the few slides that you feel students need to really grasp the information presented. Otherwise, playing it through even two times, will be more engaging for the children.</p>
Why do we Celebrate Advent? <i>Ask students this question before you begin the video.</i>	<p>This video is 1:09 in length and is narrated by a priest.</p> <p>Highlights: Catholics celebrate Advent as a way to prepare for Christmas. Similar to Lent, since Lent prepares us for Easter and the joy of the Resurrection. Advent prepares us for the joy of the incarnation. Jesus took on our humanity so we can take on his divinity (meaning we can join God in Heaven when our Earthly life is done).</p> <p>Advent is a time of silence, too, since we are waiting with the Lord, for His birth. We are waiting in expectation; it's not that we are doing nothing. We are preparing our hearts for what Jesus wants to give us in the coming among us of His son, Jesus.</p> <p><i>STOP AND REFLECT: Ask students what stood out to them from the video? Did they learn anything new? Encourage students to share their thoughts.</i></p>
Why do we Celebrate Christmas?	<p>This video is 1:18 in length: Rejoice- Reflections about Christmas.</p>

Ask students this question before you begin the video.

Highlights: Christmas is the celebration of Jesus's birth. In John 1:18, he writes:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The beginning refers to the beginning of creation, when God made everything. Jesus is the best part of this plan of creation. The words that John writes about are the words that God used to speak when he created the world or brought it to being.

Everything that exists is part of God's plan. But not all people wanted to follow God's plan. We see this when Adam and Eve ate the fruit that God told them not to eat.

Our hearts actually want things that are infinitely good. This can only be filled with God's infinite love. God decided to fix the plan because he didn't want us to be empty. He creates Israel to make things right between Him and us. Israel worshiped God at the Temple. From Israel, the world received the Messiah, Jesus. John writes:

“And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

Jesus is the new place to meet God, the new Temple. On Christmas, we go to Mass to meet Christ with joy in our hearts.

STOP AND REFLECT: Ask students what stood out to them from the video? Did they learn

	<p>anything new? Encourage students to share their thoughts.</p>
Lent in Two Minutes	<p>This video is 2:21 in length. Once again, it is not narrated. The words appear on the screen and like the other video above, they move rather quickly.</p> <p>Read out loud as fast as you can, stopping the video only when necessary.</p>
The Lent Song	<p>This video is done at 2:18. The words appear on the screen and the tune plays; however, there is no singing. You will recognize the tune, "Where is thumbkin", and you and children should be able to sing it just fine. 😊</p> <p>Please watch this video ahead of time. If you feel it will not work for your students, then don't play it.</p>
Holy Week in Three Minutes	<p>This video runs 2:50 in length.</p> <p>Highlights: Once again, this video is not narrated. Words appear on the screen with music in the background. It explains Holy Week in a way that students will understand.</p> <p>As previously suggested, read it out loud to the children.</p> <p>STOP AND REFLECT: Ask students what stood out to them from the video? Did they learn anything new? Encourage students to share their thoughts.</p>
Pentecost in Two Minutes	<p>This video runs 2:19.</p> <p>Highlights: Once again, this video is not narrated. Words appear on the screen with music in the background. This video you may need to stop the video more often, since students may not be as familiar with Pentecost.</p>

	<p>You may feel the need to explain more or to make sure you can read all the words that are moving quickly across the screen.</p> <p>Important concept for students to understand is that Pentecost occurs 50 days after Easter Sunday and celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. It is the birthday of our Catholic Faith.</p> <p>The entire Easter Season celebrates Jesus's victory over death, resurrection to new life, the Ascension into Heaven, and the giving of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>The Holy Spirit is the love poured out for us from the Father and the Son</p>
<p>What are Holy Days of Obligation</p>	<p>This video is 2:05 in length and is narrated by a priest.</p> <p>Highlights: Father points out that Mass on Sundays is a Holy Day of Obligation.</p> <p>Holy Days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 1 – All Saints Day • December 8 – Feast of the Immaculate Conception • December 25 – Christmas • January 1 – Feast of the Mother of God <p>These are the Holy Days that are obligatory to attend Mass.</p> <p>Next, Father shares information about Holy Days from the CCC</p>
<p>Introduction into the Activities</p>	<p>This video is .52 in length.</p> <p>Highlights: Prior to explaining the activities, Carla explains that cultures around the world have different customs centered around the</p>

	liturgical calendar, especially Holy Days of Obligation and the great feasts of Christmas and Easter. Ex: The Spanish custom of Day of the Dead.
Holy Day of Obligation Research Report For additional information on Holy Days of Obligation, refer to the information included at the end of this lesson plan. Click on the hyperlink to learn more information about specific holy days.	You may not have the materials needed for students to complete a report. Here is one idea that you can download for free with a Teachers Pay Teachers account (which is free to sign up for). Click on the hyperlink below to access. <u>Immaculate Conception Information Sheet</u> Each student receives a copy of the handout that you read all together. If you do not have the time for students to complete a writing activity, you can read and discuss.
Liturgical Calendar	Students will color in the calendar based on the colors of the Liturgical Season. You can use the complete sample to help students complete the activity. One suggestion: Guiding students to start at the same color and move around the wheel will provide you with an opportunity to review the seasons, their colors, and meaning as the students color their calendar.
Closing Prayer	Model a spontaneous prayer of Thanksgiving.

Holy Days of Obligation: Catholic Holy Days for 2023

[Stephen Spiewak](#)



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How many Holy Days of Obligation can you name?

Your answer probably depends on where you live.

And when you were born.

The Catholic Church has such a rich history, and Holy Days of Obligation represent but a small part of the Church's story. However, what they celebrate shines a light on the most beautiful truths of our faith.

They're not merely requirements. Holy Days of Obligation might better be known as Holy Days of Opportunity—the chance to grow in faith and encounter God through the most important tenets of our faith.

Let Hallow help guide you through everything you need to know about Holy Days of Obligation in the Catholic Church.

What Is a Holy Day of Obligation?

Rather than defining Holy Days by what's required (Mass attendance and a refrain from unnecessary work), we might think about Holy Days of Obligation by what they offer: beautiful reminders of important ways God has shown His love for us.

These are important days in the liturgical year in which we recognize God's love for us. They

require us to attend Mass, just as we're obligated to attend Mass each week on Sundays.

The 10 Holy Days According to Canon Law

Holy Days have a long history in the Church. In 1642, Pope Urban reduced the number of Holy Days of Obligation to 36.

In the 1917 [Code of Canon Law](#), The Vatican listed the following 10 days as Holy Days of Obligation:

- Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ (Christmas)
- The Epiphany
- The Ascension
- The Body and Blood of Christ ("Corpus Christi")
- Holy Mary Mother of God
- Immaculate Conception
- Assumption
- St. Joseph
- Saints Peter and Paul
- All Saints

The Vatican also gave conferences of bishops the power to suppress Holy Days or transfer them to Sundays (meaning a person could attend Mass on Sunday and fulfill the obligation for the Holy Day.)

This means that Holy Days vary slightly by country.

Holy Days of Obligation in the United States in 2023

In 1991, the [USCCB decreed](#) the following Holy Days of Obligation, suppressing days like the Feasts of St. Joseph and Saints Peter and Paul and celebrating the Epiphany on a Sunday each year to come up with the following list of Holy Days of Obligation for American Catholics:

- January 1, the [Solemnity of Mary](#), Mother of God
- May 18 (Thursday of the Sixth Week of Easter) the Solemnity of the Ascension
- August 15, the solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- November 1, the [Solemnity of All Saints](#)
- December 8, the Solemnity of the [Immaculate Conception](#)
- December 25, the Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Additionally, the bishops decreed that when the Solemnity of Mary, the Assumption and All Saints fall on Saturdays or Mondays, the obligation to attend Mass on that day is canceled. Catholics can attend Mass regularly on Sunday.

The Epiphany has been permanently transferred to the first Sunday after January 1 in the U.S.

Finally, there are even differences in how each diocese handles Holy Days. [In 2022](#), certain archdioceses in the U.S. observed the Ascension on Thursday as a Holy Day of Obligation, while others “transferred” it to Sunday and observed the day then.

Further, within the U.S., Hawaii has aligned its calendar with the Episcopal Conference of the Pacific (CEPAC)

[According to the USCBB](#), "In a decree dated March 23, 1992, the Bishop of Honolulu designated Christmas and the Immaculate Conception as the only two Holydays of Obligation for the State of Hawaii."

Holy Days in Different Countries

There is even more variety in Holy Days of Obligation because some countries recognize Holy Days outside of the list the Vatican prescribed.

On May 17, 1846, U.S. bishops adopted Mary, under the title of her Immaculate Conception—as [the country's patron saint](#).

Elsewhere, countries celebrate their patron saints on Holy Days of Obligation.

In Ireland, the Feast of [St. Patrick](#) is a Holy Day of Obligation; Mexico [recognizes Our Lady of Guadalupe](#) as a Holy Day.

Days That Are Not Holy Days of Obligation

There are several important liturgical observances and holidays that might seem like they are Holy Days of Obligation but actually are not.

That list includes:

- [Ash Wednesday](#)
- Holy Thursday

- [Good Friday](#)
- [Thanksgiving](#)

Of course, you can still go to church on these days!

This information is taken from the Hallow Website.