

# St. John's Newsletter



## Holy Days of Obligation

Who has a calendar that is not filled with family and work obligations? Most of us are very busy and recognize that we must set aside Sundays for Mass. So when some people hear there are Holy Days of Obligation, there is resistance to the “extra.” However, there are only 5 days in the entire year (outside of Sundays) that the Church expects Catholics to honor.

1. Immaculate Conception of Blessed Virgin Mary – Dec. 8
2. Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas) – December 25
3. Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – January 1
4. Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – August 15
5. All Saints Day – November 1

If one of these special days falls on Sunday or even a Monday, they are traditionally celebrated on the weekend so sometimes it is fewer than 5 extra days in the year.

Other significant days fall on Sundays. Easter always falls on a Sunday so it has the obligation of Sunday. The Ascension of Jesus which used to be on a Thursday 40 days after Easter is now celebrated on the seventh Sunday of Easter.

While Ash Wednesday is technically not a Holy Day of Obligation, many Catholics honor the first day of the Lenten season by attending Mass and receiving ashes. That opportunity is a wonderful way to start Lent.

The precepts (directives) of the Catholic Church are promoted to encourage a “moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life.” We are strengthened by celebrating the Eucharist and uniting together in our community of prayer.

“The first precept is that you shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor requires the faithful to sanctify the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord as well as the principal liturgical feasts honoring the mysteries of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 2041-2042*)

Obligation is a word that makes the opportunity to attend Mass seem like a chore, and our calendars are filled with too many chores. I think it should be called Holy Days of Opportunities. Check your calendars and see if you can squeeze in these 5 opportunities to grow in your faith.

## Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is celebrated on August 15. The feast day celebrates the belief that God assumed the Virgin Mary into Heaven following her death. Mary's reception into heaven is the pledge of the fulfillment of Christ's promise that he is also preparing a place for us in Heaven.

Like the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception, the dogma of the Assumption is not explicitly stated in the Bible. The teaching that at the end of her earthly life, Mary was assumed into heavenly glory, body and soul was dogmatically defined by Pius XII in 1950 in *Munificentissimus Deus*.

The difference between Mary assuming into heaven and Christ ascending into heaven is that of Christ's divinity. Christ did not need anyone else's power to assume Him back to heaven; rather He ascended on His own.

Sources:

[https://www.learnreligions.com/catholic-holy-days-of-obligation-542490?utm\\_source=pinterest](https://www.learnreligions.com/catholic-holy-days-of-obligation-542490?utm_source=pinterest)

<https://catholicletters.com/must-roman-catholics-go-mass-every-sunday/>

<https://thecatholic handbook.com/2024-holy-days-of-obligation-for-catholics/>

Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Assumption of Mary  
Mass Schedule  
Aug. 15  
8 am - Main Church  
6 pm - Main Church