THE YEAR of our LORD

The Church Year is a cycle of seasons and feasts that makes present for us the saving action of Jesus' life and ministry.

Catholics around the world throughout history have shaped their faith and marked their lives by these events.

The Church Year is made of two cycles running at the same time:

- one cycle centers on the Mysteries of Christ; its seasons are Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Ordinary Time.
- the other cycle recalls those who have been sanctified by Christ—the Blessed Virgin and the saints and martyrs.

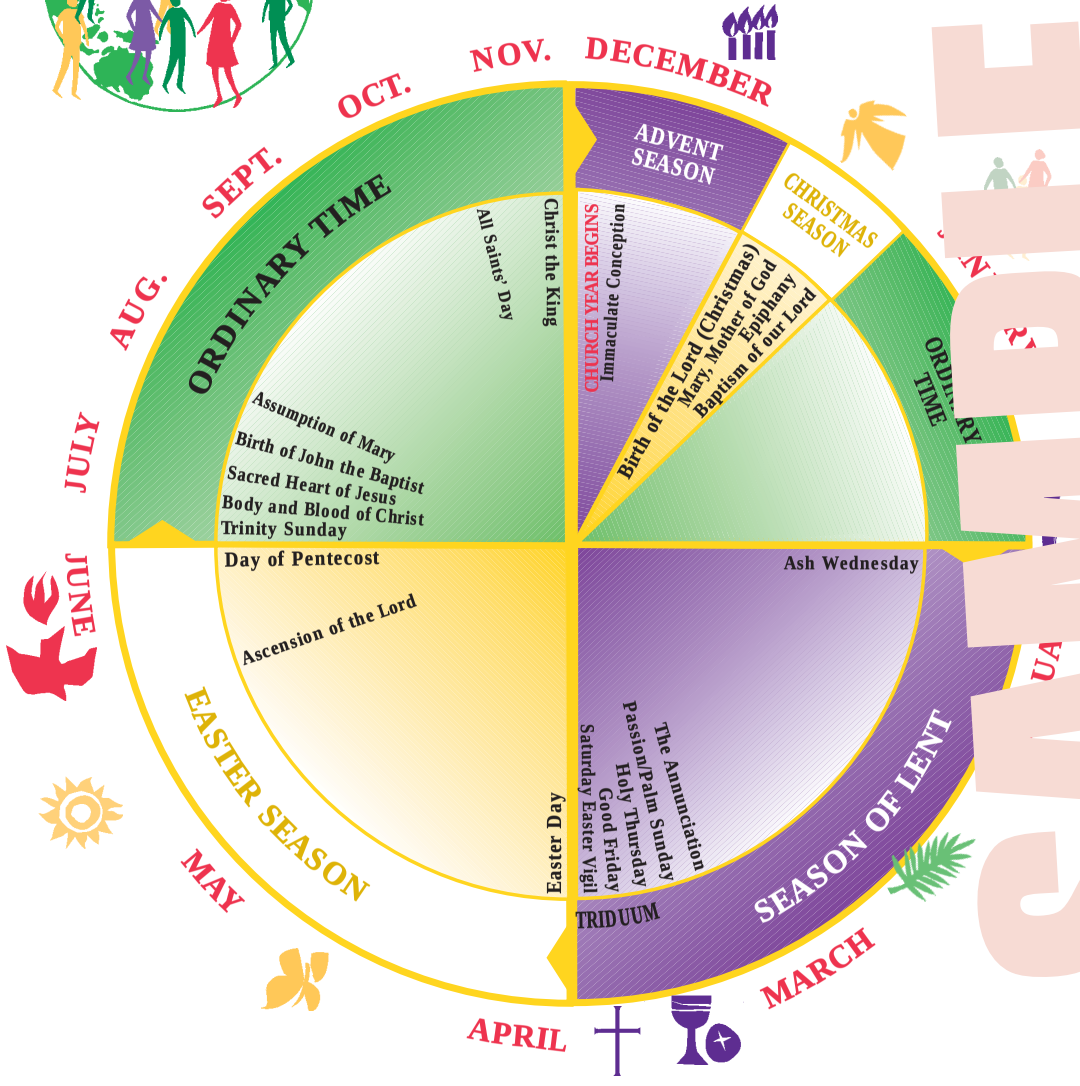
With one cycle the Church Year honors Christ. With the other cycle it honors those who followed him closely.

The community of believers, the Church, keeps observing the Church Year because it celebrates God's work of redemption.

When Catholics observe the Church Year's feasts and seasons, they

- learn the words and acts of God that have changed history;
- remember the birth, life, death and resurrection of our Lord for us;
- participate in the saving events through which our Lord creates his Church and transforms our lives.

The Temporal Cycle of the Church Year revolves around three great feast days that celebrate the Mysteries of Christ—Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. The seasons that connect these days are Advent, the Christmas Season, Lent, the Easter Season, and Ordinary Time.



Advent
Begins the 4th Sunday before Christmas in preparation for Christ's coming.

Christmas Season
2 weeks of celebration of Christ's birth, leading to Epiphany, the "Christmas of the Gentiles," and the Baptism of our Lord.

Ordinary Time
4 to 9 weeks between the Christmas Season and Lent.

Lent
Ash Wednesday followed by 40 days of preparation for Easter, concluding at the three days of the Triduum, the very center of the whole church year.

Holy Week
Passion Sunday followed by The Easter Triduum, the three days beginning with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and ending with Vespers on Easter Sunday.

Easter Season
Easter Sunday followed by 50 days of rejoicing, including the Ascension, leading to the season's climax, Pentecost.

Ordinary Time
2 dozen weeks from Holy Trinity Sunday to Christ the King Sunday. The feast of All Saints is celebrated late in this season.

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