

THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

The Christian Church Year is living history. It is ancient events brought to life each year. It is history that is as alive as the Church itself.



The Church Year is a cycle of festivals and seasons. Christians around the world and throughout history have shaped their faith and marked their lives by these events.

The first half of the Church Year (Advent through Pentecost Day) recalls events in the life of our Lord, making them real for us in the present.

The rest of the Church Year (Pentecost Season) focuses on discipleship—the new life in Christ in which we are living and growing.

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

When Christians observe the Church Year’s festivals 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 these saving events through which our Lord creates his Church and transforms our lives.

The Church Year revolves around three great festival days—Christmas, Easter and Pentecost—and the seasons that connect them—Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, and Pentecost or Ordinary Time.



ADVENT SEASON

As the Church Year begins, we spend four weeks in preparation for Christ’s coming on Christmas Day.



CHRISTMAS SEASON

12 days of celebration of Christ’s birth, leading to Epiphany, the “Christmas of the Gentiles.”



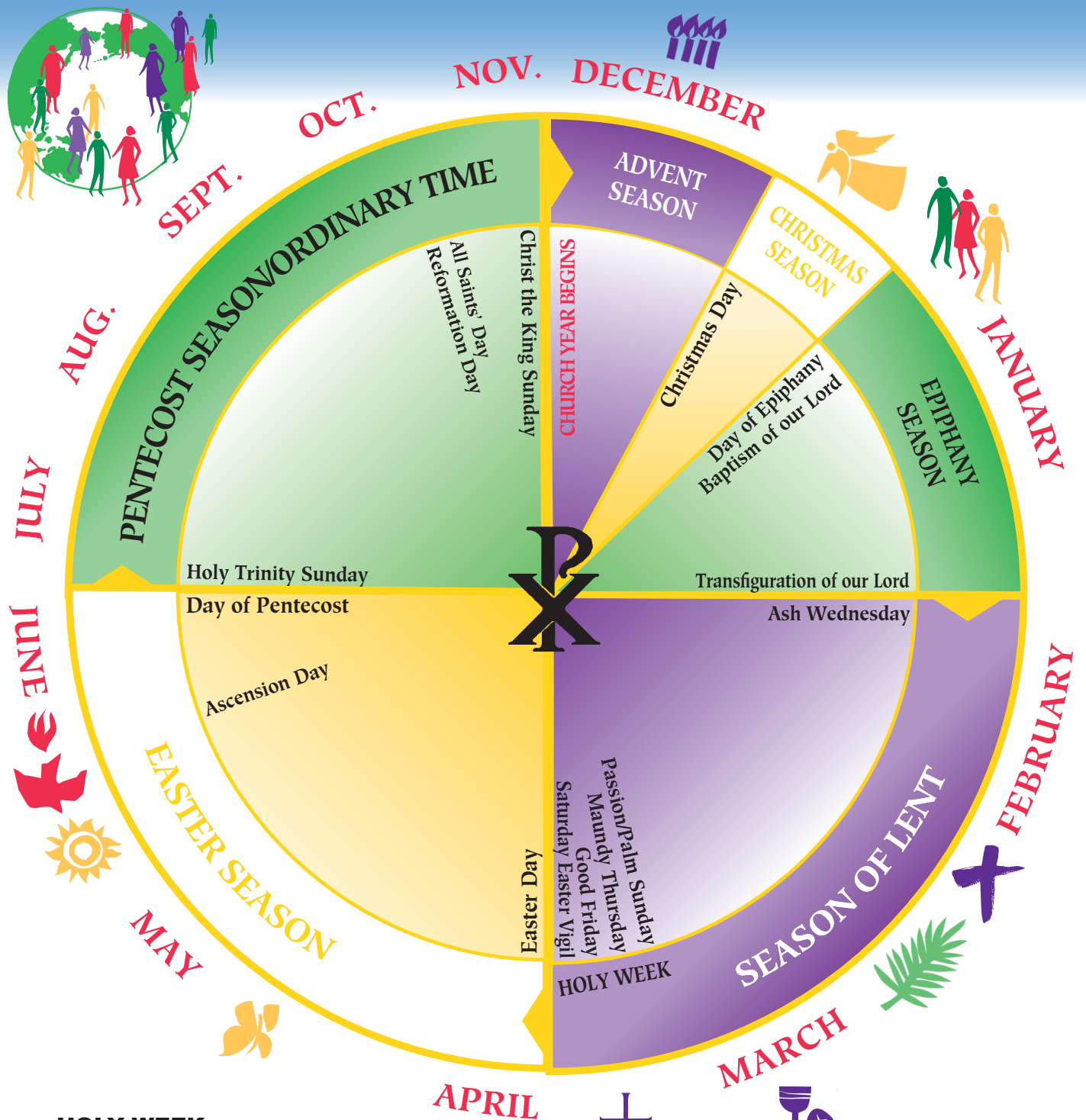
EPIPHANY SEASON

4 to 9 weeks of thanks for Christ’s revelation to the world.



LENTEN SEASON

Ash Wednesday followed by 40 days of preparation, concluding during Holy Week.



HOLY WEEK

Palm or Passion Sunday followed by the Easter Triduum (the three days beginning with the Lord's Supper on Maundy Thursday and ending on Easter Sunday).



EASTER SEASON

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



PENTECOST SEASON OR ORDINARY TIME

Two dozen weeks from Holy Trinity Sunday to Christ the King Sunday. The festival of All Saints is celebrated late in this season.