

About the Art

The Story of Creation

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters.

Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw how good the light was. God then separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” Thus evening came, and morning followed—the first day.

Then God said, “Let there be a dome in the middle of the waters, to separate one body of water from the other.” And so it happened: God made the dome, and it separated the water above the water below it. God called the dome “the sky.” Evening came, and morning followed—the second day.

Then God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered into a single basin, so that the dry land may appear.” And so it happened: the water under the sky was gathered into its basin, and the dry land appeared. God called the dry land “the earth,” and the basin of the water he called “the sea.” God saw how good it was. Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seed in it.” And so it happened: the earth brought forth every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree on earth that bears fruit with its seeds in it. God saw how good it was. Evening came, and morning followed—the third day.

Then God said: “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky, to separate day from night. Let them mark the fixed times, the days and the years, and serve as luminaries in the dome of the sky, to shed light upon the earth.” And so it happened: God made the two great lights, the greater

one to govern the day, and the lesser one to govern the night; and he made the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky, to shed light upon the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. God saw how good it was. Evening came, and morning followed—the fourth day.

Then God said, “Let the water teem with an abundance of living creatures, and on the earth let birds fly beneath the dome of the sky.” And so it happened: God created the great sea monsters and all kinds of swimming creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of winged birds. God saw how good it was, and God blessed them saying, “Be fertile, multiply, and fill the water of the seas; and let the birds multiply on the earth.” Evening came, and morning followed—the fifth day.

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals of all kinds.” And so it happened: God made all kinds of wild animals, all kinds of cattle, and all kinds of creeping things of the earth. God saw how good it was. Then God said: “Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.”

God created man in his image;
in the divine image he created him;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them: “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth.” God also said: “See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food; and to all the animals of the land, all the birds of the air, and all the living creatures that crawl on the ground, I give all the green plants for food.” And so it happened. God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed—the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. Since on the seventh day God was finished with the work he had been doing, he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation.

Such is the story of the heavens and the earth at their creation.

(Genesis 1:1–31; 2:1–4)

The Garden of Eden

God saw how good it was . . .

When you hear the word *paradise*, what comes to mind? Do you picture a luxurious place with a temperate climate? A place of indulgence and pampering? Do you see sandy beaches, where the waves of the ocean play with your toes? Or do you think of heaven—a “holy place,” where you can remain in the presence of God eternally and fully?

This holy place was God’s original order of creation. When God created the heavens and the earth, the plants and the sea, the animals and humanity (who were free to make choices), he found “it to be good” (see Genesis 1:1–31). All dwelled in harmony. Vegetation flourished. Man and woman (Adam and Eve) were to be fruitful and multiply. God dwelled with the created order in the Garden of Eden (see Genesis 2:4b–25). Everything was good in the world. There was no fighting, no tears or sadness—only love. The Garden was indeed “paradise” (the literal meaning of the word Eden in Hebrew).

Sin

But paradise was disrupted. Evil entered the world (see Genesis 3:1–24). Adam and Eve sinned. They were expelled from the garden, their dwelling place with God (3:24).

But people continued to sin. They worshipped idols. They committed adultery. They bore false witness. They neglected the poor. The rich became

richer. Wars raged. Plagues left children without parents and parents without children. The mighty enslaved the lowly. The land became barren.

Was God absent? Did he abandon his people? Was there no chance for restoration? The people cried out for God to save them, to forgive them for their transgressions. But because of the stain of sin, they couldn't see him. They were blind to his presence. They were no longer home. They needed signs of God!

God sent many signs of his constant presence. The great flood did not destroy all the land. Barren women bore children. God parted the sea and rained down manna from heaven. He gave Ten Commandments and spared those who offered an acceptable sacrifice. Above all, he made a covenant with his people. Through that covenant, he promised he would never abandon or destroy that which he created. Creation would once again flourish (see Genesis 9:8–17).

God anointed priests to establish right worship; kings to lead the people safely to their homeland; and prophets to show the way to renewed faithfulness. The prophets pointed to the one who would be anointed with the "Spirit of the Lord . . . / to bring glad tidings to the poor . . . / to proclaim liberty to captives . . . / to [give] sight to the blind, / to let the oppressed go free, / and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord" (Luke 4:18–19). This Savior would show them "the path to life" (Psalm 16:11). They would be free! Lifted of their sinful burdens, they would be filled with grace and live with God eternally in love. He would release them from a life of poverty and oppression and bring them back to their homeland, their garden of paradise where they would delight at his right hand forever (see Psalm 16:11b).

The people heard the prophets. They prayed and waited for the Savior. They gave God thanks and praise for his covenant—his promise.

Eternal Paradise

Once more, God came to dwell among his chosen people. With the birth of Jesus Christ, the Savior—fully divine and fully human—the disruption of paradise was healed. Heaven and earth were once more united by a bond of love. Jesus is the one for whom God's chosen ones prepared the way. He is the One, anointed by God as priest, prophet, and king. He is the one who brings forth a kingdom for the poor, restores sight to the blind, and gives freedom to the oppressed (see Luke 4:18–19). He "restores lost innocence" (see the *Exsultet*, the Easter Proclamation). He took the sins of the world upon his shoulders, sacrificing his life so that the people of God would be restored to new life; that all of creation would once more live in God's paradise.

Jesus Christ died for all, and with his death comes joy, peace, and eternal life. He rose from the dead and now sits at the right hand of the Father. But he is not in some distant place; he is all around us, everywhere and always. With Christ's Passion, death, and Resurrection, the relationship between God and man was restored.

Christ died. Christ is risen. But, he will come again! People still have free will, the ability to choose to do good or to sin. And so wars continue to rage; the homeless beg for food or money on street corners. Prisons are filled with criminals and hospitals with the sick.

We wait and pray . . .

We continue to pray for peace and justice and unity of all the faithful. We pray that the love of God will fill our hearts and embrace our world.

And we still wait for that day when the kingdom of God will flourish in its fullness, the day when our Lord Jesus Christ will return in his glory. On that day we will once again be in the garden of paradise, as God originally created.

The Art

The Church recognizes this aspect of our faith ritually during the season of Advent. Each Sunday, we hear

from the prophets of the Old Testament, who help us glimpse the kingdom of God by pointing to the fullness of salvation given through Jesus Christ.

The corners of this year's calendar depict the prophets' visions of the kingdom. We hear of these visions on the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Sundays of Advent during Year B of 2009, the period in which we, the Church, publicly profess our belief in the one who will come again; the one who will establish peace and justice; the one who will bring unity and love to all.

Top Left

On the First Sunday of Advent, the prophet Isaiah admits guilt and pleads for God not to turn away, but to come as redeemer. The people of God wither away in their guilt, and long for deliverance. "Yet, O LORD, you are our father; / we are the clay and you the potter: / we are all the work of your hands" (Isaiah 64:7). God forms and molds his people. Like a parent who loves his or her child, God will return.

Top Right

On the Second Sunday of Advent, the prophet Isaiah announces, "in the desert prepare the way of the LORD!" For when the Lord comes, "every valley shall be filled in, / every mountain and hill shall be made low; / The rugged land shall be made a plain, / the rough country, a broad valley. / Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed . . ." (Isaiah 40:3–4). There are no boundaries to the love of God.

Lower Right

On the Third Sunday of Advent, the prophet Isaiah proclaims that "glad tidings" will be given "to the lowly," broken hearts will be healed, prisoners will be released, captives will be freed, and vindication will be given by God. When this happens "as the earth brings forth its plants, / and a garden makes its growth spring up, / So will the Lord God make justice and praise / spring up before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:1, 11).

Lower Left

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, God tells King David through the prophet Nathan that he will establish a homeland for his beloved people. "Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me; your throne shall stand firm forever" (2 Samuel 7:16).

The Center

Just as the prophets point to Christ (as illustrated in the four corners of the calendar), each of the four corners directs our attention to the center of the calendar, showing the Eucharist (Christ) exposed in a lush, peaceful garden. The garden is the restoration of all of creation just as the prophets envisioned. This restoration has been given and is fulfilled in Christ Jesus, whom we encounter each Sunday, sometimes daily, in the Eucharist, for it is in the Eucharist that Christ's love transforms and strengthens us to go forth into the world and serve in his name.

We continue to pray and wait for the kingdom of God to be fulfilled, in a world where "the wolf shall be a guest of the lamb, / and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; / The calf and the young lion shall browse together, / with a little child to guide them . . . / There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain; / for the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the LORD . . ." (Isaiah 11:6, 9).

—Danielle A. Knott, Editor

When Christ comes again, salvation will be given in its fullness.

**Love and truth will meet;
justice and peace will kiss.
Truth will spring from the earth;
justice will look down from
heaven.**

**The LORD will surely grant abundance;
our land will yield its increase.**

(Psalm 85:11–13)

How to Use the Year of Grace in Schools and Parishes

- Give (or sell) one to every household in the parish or school.
- Hang a poster calendar in every classroom.
- Present calendars to first communicants and Confirmation candidates.
- Adorn the church vestibule and gathering space.
- Don't forget the teacher's lounge, offices, and public areas in the school!

Teaching Tips with the Year of Grace

Here are some ways you can use this calendar to teach your children and RCIA catechumens and candidates.

- Catechize about the liturgical year.
- Point out feast days and name days.
- Show the difference between the liturgical and the secular year (civic observances).
- Have students report on the significance of various days.
- Open up the "story of creation." What was the garden like? Who was there? How did everyone get along?
- Explain the "fall of man" and original sin.
- Explain what the meaning is of paradise, heaven, or eternal life.
- Use the art to show how salvation will be the restoration of the Garden of Eden, where the lion will lay with the lamb.
- Use the art as guided mediation or reflection. Read each First Reading from the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Sundays of Advent Year B. Have a child read. Then invite the students to pause after each reading. Ask them what they think each reading means. What do the prophets say about

our behavior? What do the prophets say about what God will bring? What will happen when we are fully saved? Who will bring this salvation? Who do the prophets get us ready for? Ask the students to look at each corner of the calendar. How does the art illustrate the reading? What symbols are shown? What do they think it means? Then have them look at the center of the calendar. How do they interpret this picture in light of Jesus Christ?

The Liturgical Year

“Christ’s saving work is celebrated in sacred memory by the Church on fixed days throughout the year. Each week on the day called the Lord’s Day the Church commemorates the Lord’s resurrection. Once a year at Easter the Church honors this resurrection and passion with the utmost solemnity. In fact through the yearly cycle the Church unfolds the entire mystery of Christ and keeps the anniversaries of the saints” (*General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, 1).

Sunday and the Week

The first story in the book of Genesis tells what God was doing on the first day that ever was, and then on the second and third and fourth and fifth and sixth days. Genesis tells us that after six days of work, “God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good” (Genesis 1:31). And on the seventh day, God rested.

For ages and ages, then, Jews, Christians, and Muslims have been counting the days in groups of seven. That’s our basic way of dividing time, and we call it “the week.”

We read in the Acts of the Apostles that the followers of Jesus used to meet on the first day of the week. This was the day the Romans called the “Day of the Sun” or “Sunday.” For Christians, Sunday was not only the day when God began creation; it was also the day when our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead; and it was the day when the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus’ disciples.

These followers of Jesus began to call Sunday the “Lord’s Day.” On this day they came together to read aloud from the books of scripture and to pray to God for every need they could name. They gave food and money to the poor, and then they put bread and wine on a table and stood together around it. One of them, the Bishop or someone who had been sent by the Bishop, led the whole assembly in giving thanks and praise to God. They lifted up their hearts in song and remembered all the ways God had shown love for the world, especially in the death and Resurrection of Jesus. Then they ate the Eucharistic bread and drank the

consecrated wine from the cup—bread and wine that had become the body and blood of Christ. This was what made Sunday, the first day of the week, into the Lord’s Day.

This is what we Christians still do. We make the first day of the week our gathering to celebrate the Eucharist.

On the other days of the week, we pray in the morning and in the evening and at night. We participate in daily Communion. When we gather for any meal, we thank God for food and for all of God’s blessings. On Friday, the day Jesus died on the cross, we often fast by trying to eat less food and so begin our preparation for Sunday by letting ourselves be hungry. But fasting is also a way to remind ourselves to do good works, to help those in need, and to do penance for our sins.

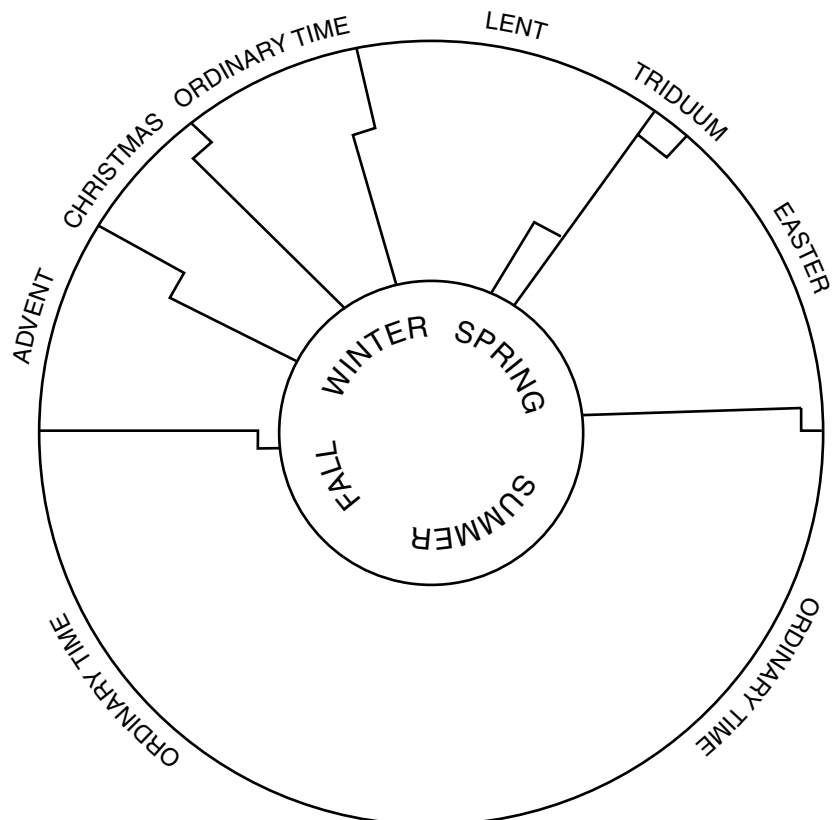
The Seasons

Advent

BEGINS FOUR SUNDAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS

ENDS AFTER MIDAFTERNOON PRAYER ON CHRISTMAS EVE

We call the days and nights before Christmas *Advent*, which means “coming.” The Church reads and sings about God’s promises. We tell the stories of many holy people: Mary and John the Baptist, Nicholas and Lucy. We strive for the time when God’s love will be seen in all of us, when peace will come through people’s acts of justice and love for each another. But, primarily, we wait. We wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ, when all will be one, and the kingdom of God will flourish! The Son of God already came to us, born in the city of David. This is what we celebrate at Christmas, and in Advent we ready ourselves and our hearts for this birth. But, we also wait for his coming again. We pray in the Creed each Sunday, “he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.” And so we wait



for his light to completely extinguish our darkness.

Christmas Season

BEGINS WITH EVENING PRAYER
ON CHRISTMAS EVE

ENDS AFTER EVENING PRAYER
ON THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM
OF THE LORD

On December 25 we proclaim, “*Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord.*” And so begins celebration of the Lord’s birth, of God becoming man. God loved us so much, that he gave us his only Son, to be one with us, to dwell among us, and to show us how to live in that love. He came to bring peace, to heal division, to end all pain, and to bring us into his eternal light.

And so we celebrate the gift of his love. We fill the long darkness with beautiful lights. We sing carols and eat delicious food. Around the festive trees—trees right inside our houses!—we give one another gifts because God has given such good gifts to us, and we open our homes to guests because God has opened heaven to us.

All through these days of Christmas we tell Christmas stories. We celebrate the first martyrs and the sacredness of the holy family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. On New Year’s Day we celebrate Mary, the Mother of God. A few days later, on Epiphany (a word that means the great manifestation of God to the world) we remember the Magi who sought the Promised One, the Christ, just as we do today. And, we end the season with the telling of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan by John.

Even after the Christmas season is over, 40 days after Christmas Day, we celebrate Jesus’ infancy once more on February 2, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, when we remember how Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem, where Simeon and Anna rejoiced in the Lord’s coming.

Lent

BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY

ENDS WITH THE CELEBRATION
OF THE EVENING MASS OF
THE LORD’S SUPPER ON HOLY
THURSDAY

For 40 days Jesus fasted and prepared to proclaim the Good News. Long before Jesus, Moses and Elijah had their 40-day fasts. It rained on the earth and

on Noah’s ark for 40 days, and the earth had a new beginning. And for 40 years the people of Israel wandered in the wilderness toward the Promised Land. In the Bible, the number 40 means that something important is taking place.

In the northern hemisphere, Lent begins in winter. But when the Forty Days are over, we know that the warmth and new life of spring are surely coming. We enter Lent with ashes on our heads, and for 40 days we fast in various ways, perhaps by eating less food and forgoing treats. We give alms, which means that we find ways to share what we have, our time and our goods. And these Forty Days have their own ways for us to pray and sing (but without ever singing or saying the “Alleluia”—that word waits for Easter). In these ways we remember our Baptism and so try to grow more deeply in the Christian life.

Each Sunday during Lent we listen to some of the most important stories in the Gospel, and we pray for the people who will be baptized on the greatest night of the year, when we celebrate the great Easter Vigil.

The Paschal Triduum

BEGINS ON HOLY THURSDAY
WITH THE EVENING MASS OF THE
LORD’S SUPPER

ENDS AFTER EVENING PRAYER
ON EASTER SUNDAY

Paschal Triduum means the “Three Days of Passover.” For the Jewish people, Passover celebrates the great event when God delivered the people of Israel from slavery. The followers of Jesus proclaim that in the life, Passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus, God has freed and saved us.

When Lent ends, we stand at the heart of the liturgical year. On the night between Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday we keep the Easter Vigil. We gather to light a great fire and a towering candle, to listen to our most treasured scriptures, to sing psalms and other songs. Then we gather around the waters of the font as those who have been preparing for new life in Christ receive the sacraments of initiation. The newly baptized are then anointed with fragrant oil called chrism; and, at last, with these newly baptized, who are now called neophytes, we celebrate the Eucharist.

We prepare for this Vigil by celebrating the institution of the Holy Eucharist on Holy Thursday and by commemorating the Lord’s Passion by venerating the cross on Good Friday. We also prepare by keeping the paschal fast, the special fast of Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The Church fasts—from food, from entertainment, from chatter, from work—so we have time to ponder deeply the death and Resurrection of the Lord, the mystery of faith that we will celebrate in our Vigil.

Easter Season

BEGINS ON EASTER SUNDAY

ENDS WITH EVENING PRAYER ON
THE SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST

Easter is 50 days, seven weeks plus one day, a week of weeks. The Easter season is to the year what Sunday is to the week. We live as if God’s kingdom has already come—because it has. We put aside our fasting for feasting and celebration. We bless ourselves with baptismal water to remind us of our share in Jesus’ Passion, death, and Resurrection. “Alleluia” is our song because we delight to praise the Lord. The stories we read from scripture are of Thomas’s and Mary Magdalene’s encounters with the risen Lord, of meals with Jesus, of the Good Shepherd, and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

As the Church baptized new Christians during the Easter Vigil, so now in the Easter season we often celebrate Confirmation and first Eucharist, Marriage, and Holy Orders.

Ordinary Time

FROM AFTER EVENING PRAYER OF
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD UNTIL
ASH WEDNESDAY

FROM AFTER EVENING PRAYER
ON PENTECOST UNTIL EVENING
PRAYER OF THE FIRST SUNDAY
OF ADVENT

For a few weeks in January and February, and then all through the summer and fall, the Church is in Ordinary Time. *Ordinary* comes from the word *ordinal* and means “counted.” In other words, each of the weeks has a number (for example, the *Third* Sunday in Ordinary Time).

During Ordinary Time, the Sunday Gospels follow Jesus from story to story in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Each of

these Gospel accounts is read for one year in the Church's three-year cycle of Sunday Mass readings. In the year 2009 we read the Gospel according to Mark, with its many stories of miracles and proclamations of Jesus. Sunday after Sunday we also read through the various letters of Paul and others in the New Testament.

Ordinary Time is full of solemnities, feasts, and memorials of the Lord and the saints. In its last weeks, we keep All Saints Day on November 1, and All Souls Day on November 2. The whole month of November becomes a time to rejoice in the communion of saints and to remember that our true home is in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Using the Calendar

This calendar provides the liturgical celebrations prescribed by the U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy and the Canadian Conference of Bishops.


Each spoke in this calendar wheel represents a week. Weeks begin on the Lord's Day, Sunday (the outer hub on the wheel), and end on Saturday (the inner hub). Each season in the liturgical year is a different color. Notice the seasons—Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter. Between Lent and Easter, you will find the Paschal Triduum, the Three Days that are the center of the liturgical year. Now notice the two spans of Ordinary Time. One of them comes in the winter and is rather short. The other comes after Pentecost and lasts all summer and fall. Then, after the last Sunday in Ordinary Time, Advent of a new year arrives.


Except during the Christmas season, each Sunday has a large number on it. The name of a Sunday is usually a combination of its number and the season (for example, the *Fourth* Sunday of *Lent* or the *Twenty-ninth* Sunday in *Ordinary Time*). The liturgical year begins with the First Sunday of Advent, November 30, 2008, and ends with Saturday of the Thirty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time, November 28, 2009.


Complete this calendar by marking the days that are important in your home, your parish, and your school. Put stickers or stars on birthdays and name days (feast day of the saint after whom a person is named) and the anniversary of events you want to remember.


The days of the liturgical year are ranked according to importance to the faith life of the church. The typeface used on this calendar indicates this ranking. The great solemnities of the liturgical year are set in the largest typeface [**EASTER SUNDAY**]. These include each Sunday, the solemnities of the Lord and of the saints, and feasts of the Lord. The next largest type [**Saint Mark**] is used for feasts of the saints. A smaller type [Saint Elizabeth of Hungary] is used for both obligatory and optional memorials of the saints and the beatified who are celebrated on the general calendar for the dioceses of the United States of America and for Canada.

The smallest type is used for secular observances [New Year's Day].

 A **fish** has been placed on the days of the Lenten fast, the Paschal fast, and on Fridays that fall outside festive seasons. On these days Christians are challenged by their tradition to eat less food and perform works of mercy.

 An **oil lamp** has been placed on the vigils of the great solemnities that by custom begin at sundown. This includes the celebration of Sunday, the Lord's Day.

 **Candles** have been placed on solemnities and feasts of the Lord that are not holy days of obligation.

 A **bread and cup** has been placed on Sundays and other days of importance (holy days of obligation).

How to Hang the Calendar

Some years, and this is one of them, this calendar works best with a top and bottom that stay in the same place all year. For other years, the art and the wheel of weeks works best when the calendar is rotated.

About the Artist

Tracy Walker studied both fine art and illustration, and graduated from the Sheridan College Illustration Program. For several years she worked as a designer in the book publishing industry before making the leap to a full-time career in illustration.

Tracy's work has been recognized by *American Illustration*, *3x3 Magazine*, *Applied Arts Magazine*, and the

Illustrator's Club of Washington, D.C. Her illustrations appear in newspapers and magazines worldwide, as well as in advertising, package design, and several books for children.

Tracy lives in Uxbridge, Ontario, Canada.



Photo by Ken Schuller

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Calendars come in two sizes: the notebook size (11 inches x 17 inches) and the poster size (26 inches square). Calendars can be purchased in paper or laminated. *Companion to the Calendar* by Mary Ellen Hynes is a book that gives information about most of the days and seasons named on the calendar as well as *Sourcebook for Sundays*, and *Weekdays: The Almanac for Pastoral Liturgy*. Order the book or additional calendars from Liturgy Training Publications, 1800 North Hermitage Avenue, Chicago IL 60622; 1-800-933-1800, fax 1-800-933-7094, e-mail orders@ltp.org. See our Web site at www.LTP.org and www.YearofGrace.com.

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