

September

Since man is both a spiritual and physical being, the Church provides for the needs of man in his everyday life. Possibly occasioned by the agricultural feasts of ancient Rome, the Church's liturgy and feasts came to be observed for the sanctification of the different seasons of the year (the quattuor tempora, the "four seasons" - Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter.)

The months of August, September, October and November are part of the harvest season, and as Christians we recall God's constant protection over his people and give thanks for the year's harvest. This was marked with the September Ember Days (after September 14th, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross) which particularly focused on the end of the harvest season and thanksgiving to God for the season.

The Church by 'Ember Days,' (from the Anglo-Saxon oemerge, meaning ashes) were three days (Wednesday, Friday and Saturday) set aside by the Church for prayer, fasting / abstinence and almsgiving near the beginning of each of the four seasons of the year. The ember days fell after December 13th, the feast of St. Lucy (Winter), after the First Sunday of Lent (Spring), after Pentecost Sunday (Summer), and after September 14th, the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Autumn). Since the revision of the Roman calendar in 1969, after the Second Vatican Council, Ember Days are observed at the discretion of each country's Episcopal Conference (the National Conference of Bishops.) Moreover, their observance may be extended beyond three days and even repeated during the year. There are no longer set Mass readings for the Ember Days in the Ordinary Rite.

Since the late 5th century they were also for obtaining God's blessing on the clergy to be ordained during the Embertides.

So during the ember days the Church had a threefold focus:

- (1) sanctifying each new season by turning to God through prayer, fasting / abstinence and almsgiving;
- (2) giving thanks to God for the various harvests of each season;
- (3) praying for the newly ordained and for future vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

September falls during the liturgical season known as Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical colour green. During September, as in all of Ordinary Time (formerly known as Time After Pentecost), the Liturgy does not focus on one particular mystery of Christ, but views the mystery of Christ in all its aspects.

We follow the life of Christ through the Gospels, and focus on the teachings and parables of Jesus and what it means for us to be a follower of Christ. During Ordinary Time we can concentrate more on the saints and imitate their holiness as Christ's followers.

September is also dedicated to the seven sorrows of Mary. The Church celebrates the memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows on September 15th.



Another harvest feast is September 29th, the Feast of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. Which before the revision of the Church's calendar in 1969, used to be only the feast of St. Michael, that in many countries was referred to as "Michaelmas," celebrated with traditional foods and customs.

This month the main liturgical feasts are:

St. Gregory the Great (September 3rd)
St. Teresa of Calcutta - Mother Teresa (September 5th)
The Birth of Mary (September 8th)
St. Peter Claver (September 9th),
The Most Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary (September 12th)
St. John Chrysostom (September 13th)
Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14th)
Our Lady of Sorrows (September 15th)
Sts. Cornelius and Cyprian (September 16th)
St. Robert Bellarmine (September 17th)
St. Januarius (September 19th)
St. Andrew Kim and Companions (September 20th)
St. Matthew (September 21st)
St. Pio (September 23rd)
Sts. Cosmas and Damian (September 26th)
St. Vincent de Paul (September 27th)
Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael - The Archangels (September 29th)
St. Jerome (September 30th)



Chief Archangel



God's Healer



God's Messenger