

The 12 Days of Christmas and the First Days after Epiphany

A suggested approach for handling the first few Sundays after Christmas Day

Day of the week Christmas Day occurs on	Date for First Sunday after Christmas	Suggested readings for Christmas 1	Date for Second Sunday after Christmas	Suggested readings for Christmas 2	Date for First Sunday after Epiphany	Suggested readings for Epiphany 1
Sunday	January 1	Name of Jesus	n/a	n/a	January 8	Epiphany 1 (omit Epiphany)
Monday	December 31	Christmas 1 or New Year's Eve	n/a	n/a	January 7	Epiphany Day (omit Epiphany 1)
Tuesday	December 30	Christmas 1	n/a	n/a	(Sunday, January 6, is Epiphany Day)	
Wednesday	December 29	Christmas 1	January 5	Epiphany Day	January 12	Epiphany 1
Thursday	December 28	Christmas 1 or Holy Innocents	January 4	Epiphany Day	January 11	Epiphany 1
Friday	December 27	Christmas 1 or Saint John	January 3	Epiphany Day	January 10	Epiphany 1
Saturday	December 26	Christmas 1 or Saint Stephen	January 2	Epiphany Day	January 9	Epiphany 1

Name of Jesus: The eighth day of Christmas is set aside to remember the circumcision and name of Jesus, which occurred on the eighth day of his life. The Proper for the “Name of Jesus” is listed in *CW: Manual* on page 451.

Holy Innocents: December 28 is set aside as a day to remember the “Holy Innocents” (Matthew 2:13-18). The Proper for “Holy Innocents” is listed in *CW: Manual* on page 466. Due to this event’s close connection to Christmas, it may be preferable to replace the regular lectionary’s readings for the Sunday after Christmas with the readings for “Holy Innocents” when December 28 occurs on a Sunday.

Saint John: December 27 is set aside as a day to commemorate the apostle John. The Proper for “St. John, Apostle and Evangelist” is listed in *CW: Manual* on page 466.

Saint Stephen: December 26 is set aside as a day to commemorate Stephen, the first martyr. The Proper for “St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr” is listed in *CW: Manual* on page 465.

Epiphany: Because Epiphany is one of the five major festivals in the Christian Church calendar, it may be useful to celebrate Epiphany on the Second Sunday after Christmas (when Christmas Day occurs on a Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or Saturday). When January 7 occurs on a Sunday, the chart above suggests celebrating Epiphany and omitting Epiphany 1. When January 8 occurs on a Sunday, the chart suggests celebrating the Baptism of Jesus (Epiphany 1) and omitting Epiphany.