

LITURGY BYTES

Word of God Weekend

Back in 2019, Pope Francis announced that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time be celebrated as the Sunday of the Word of God. This year it falls on January 23rd. The lectionary reminds us in its introductory pages of the role of the Word of God in the life of the Church: *“In the hearing of God’s word, the Church is built up and grows, and in the signs of the liturgical celebration God’s wonderful, past works in the history of salvation are presented anew as mysterious realities. God in turn makes use of the congregation of the faithful that celebrates the Liturgy in order that his word may speed on and be glorified and that his name be exalted among the nations.”*

In one of the final acts of our Risen Lord before his Ascension, Jesus appeared to the disciples, broke bread with them and opened their minds to the understanding of the Sacred Scriptures. Even among their great fear and bewilderment, he unveiled the meaning of the paschal mystery: that in accordance with the Father’s eternal plan he had to suffer and rise from the dead, in order to bring repentance and the forgiveness of sins. He then promised that he would send the Holy Spirit who would give them strength to be witnesses of this saving mystery. The relationship between the Risen Lord, the community of believers and sacred Scripture is essential to our identity as Christians. Without the Lord who opens our minds to them, it is impossible to understand the Scriptures in depth.

May the Sunday of the Word of God help us all to grow in religious and intimate familiarity with the Sacred Scriptures. There are numerous resources both in book form and online to offer guidance and knowledge. A new podcast entitled: *The Bible in a Year (Ascension Press)* has received special recognition for its work. Why not start the new year embracing God’s Holy Word in a different way.

Have a safe, healthy, and blessed week! ~~*Michele Hahn*