

LITURGY BYTES

Happy New Year!!



First Sunday of Advent

Yes, I know we just celebrated Thanksgiving a few days ago. The wish of Happy New Year has to do with the Church's liturgical year. The liturgical year ended last weekend with the feast of Christ the King and begins this weekend with the First Sunday of Advent.

We also will hear a new set of scripture readings, known as Cycle C, with the Gospels being from St. Luke. There are three-year Sunday cycles: A, B and C following every time a different synoptic Gospel. Year A is the Gospel of Matthew, Year B is the Gospel of Mark, and Year C is the Gospel of Luke. The other Gospel, somehow different, of John is used during special Sundays throughout the liturgical year. Each of the evangelists portrays Jesus its own way, as if from a different angle, and seems to address a different set of people.

The Gospel of Luke is read in its entirety on consecutive Sundays every three years. Though the gospel stories appear to be no different from the same ones read last year from Mark or the year before from Matthew, there are some very original stories like that of the Good Samaritan or Prodigal Son that are not found in the other Gospels.

We do not read the Gospel of Luke the way the Jews read the Torah throughout their year, but the texts are selected according to the needs of the season of Advent, which prepares us for the second coming as well as the first coming of Christ. Also this is true in the Christmas season that celebrates the events of Christ's birth, and during Lent where only stories calling for conversion and prayer are used. The most sequential readings from Luke are in Ordinary Time between Christmas and Lent, and between Pentecost and Christ the King.

These are just a few thoughts about Luke's Gospel for us to reflect on today. May you enjoy this Advent season of waiting and anticipation!

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