

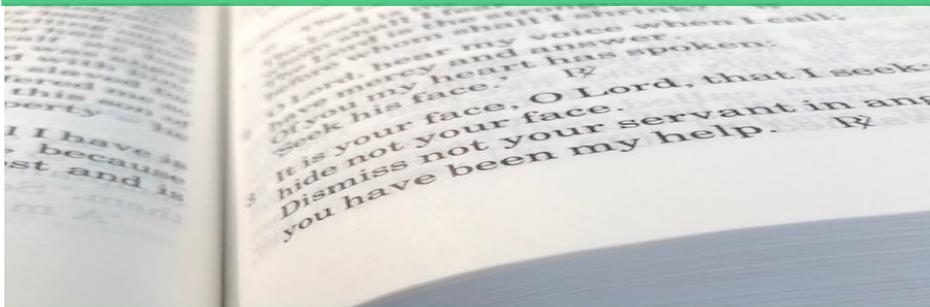
Ordinary Time ...

Ordinary, as applied to two significant parts of the Liturgical Year, derives from the word ordinal which refers to the positioning of something in a numbered list. Therefore we have two periods of numbered Sundays and weeks during the year. We have recently entered into the longer of the two. This began on the Monday after Pentecost Sunday.

Because the date of Easter changes from year to year, we returned this year to week 9 of Ordinary time on that Monday and at the end of week 34 we will begin a new cycle of worship and prayer on the First Sunday of Advent. The other period of Ordinary time this year began as usual on the Monday after the Baptism of the Lord and concluded with week 8 as we entered into Lent.

Weeks 1-8 enabled us to reflect more deeply on the mystery and purpose of the Incarnation. Weeks 9-34 encourage us to participate more fully in the age of the church, strengthened by the power of it's beginnings. At the end of the year as we reach the Solemnity of Christ the King and continue into the first part of Advent we will be encouraged to look forward in confidence to the coming in glory of our Risen Saviour.

Father Peter Dutton



LITURGY OF THE WORD A journey through Ordinary Time

- The Gospels of the 14th to 18th Sundays of Ordinary time demonstrate some of the challenges faced by disciples. We are reminded that discipleship is not easy; disciples must expect suffering for they are marked with the sign of the cross.
- The Hebrew Scripture reading on the 18th Sunday uses the word 'vanity' in a way we neither use nor understand it. Another translation of Ch1 v2 is: "Meaningless! Meaningless" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless!" which makes the passage more easily understood, *although the text in the Lectionary must always be the one proclaimed*. The readings on this Sunday reflect on the lack of importance of matters of daily life and goods and make clear that what is important is our relationship with God.
- The reading from the Apocalypse on the Feast of The Assumption is difficult if the symbolism is not understood. The original audience was persecuted Christians who received this as a coded message. The woman in this reading is symbolic of the Church, and her offspring represents the way the Church brings Christ into the world. The dragon represents the world's resistance to Christ and the truths that the church proclaims. The twelve stars are the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The Gospel readings from the 18th to 21st Sundays are a single teaching that Jesus gave on his way to Jerusalem which was addressed to the crowd as well as the disciples. Jesus warns them about hypocrisy and about the persecution they will meet. He asks them to give away their belongings and trust God to meet their needs, to keep their perspective, be clear about their priorities and not become complacent.
- The readers of the letter to the Hebrews were getting frustrated and complacent because Jesus' return was not as imminent as they had expected. The extract from the letter read on 21st Sunday begins "Have you forgotten that encouraging text in which you are addressed as sons?" That encouraging text is: "The discipline of the Lord, my son, do not spurn; do not disdain his reproof; For whom the Lord loves he reproves, as a father, the son he favours." (Proverbs 3:11-12). The discipline referred to was probably the prejudice and persecution they suffered from those around them. The extract goes on to explain that suffering is necessary for growth.

Jane Brazier



LOOKING FORWARD Dates for the diary

At a recent Commission meeting the Diocesan Liturgy Office began looking at plans for next year. 2020 has been declared a Year of the Word under the title *The God who Speaks*, and this has influenced much of our planning.

So far the diary looks a bit like this:

October - 'Opening up the RCIA' a time of sharing and updating for RCIA coordinators.

November - 'Sharing our Story' a time for our children's liturgy leaders.

February - 'Our Salvation Story' a look at the great Easter Vigil.

15 February - *Bishop's Retreat Day* for those on the RCIA journey.

1 March - *The Rite of Election* for those seeking Communion with the church at Easter.

March - 'Singing God's Praises' a day for Psalmists and cantors.

July - 'God Speaks' - a day of recollection for Ministers of the Word.

Dates, times and venues will be confirmed soon.

We are also planning the relaunch of our training for Ministers of the Word and we will let you have more details as soon as possible.

Father Chris Matthews