

Learning about the Lectionary

What's a **Lectionary**?

What the **JEWS** did in the Synagogue (Temple destroyed 70 AD)

One-year cycle

Two parts: TORAH and HAFTORAH (usually prophets) readings

What the **EARLY CHRISTIANS** did

Three parts: Old Testament

Plus readings from Apostles and Evangelists

The very earliest of these documented is a lectionary from about 425 AD.

Roman Catholics developed 1-year lectionary at Council of Trent (16th Cent.)

Every Sunday a Gospel reading from Evangelium

Plus one from either OT or Epistle from Epistolarium

After Vatican II (1965) RC Church introduced a new lectionary

3-year cycle, with 4 readings for each Sunday and High Day

4 readings: OT/ Psalm/ Epistle/ Gospel

Protestant lectionaries followed suit

Most recent is Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), organized by the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) in 1992.

CCT consisted of 18 denominations in the United States and Canada.

These include Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, all Lutherans, some Baptists,

Disciples of Christ, Mennonites, Presbyterians (PCUSA), United Methodists

The Three-Year Cycle

Year A – Matthew Year B – Mark Year C – Luke

With John reading interspersed through all three.

Which year are we finishing? (Year B)

Gospel Reading is the KEY. Other readings normally based on it.

Locating us in the Current Church Year

We are on the Last Sunday of the year. Next Sunday is Advent 1

Today's assigned Readings

Old Testament – Isaiah 51:4-6

Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: Instruction will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations. My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my righteousness will never fail.

Epistle – Jude 20-25

But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt; save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh. To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Gospel – Mark 13:24-37

But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.