

# TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 31.  
July 30, 2023  
Proper 12

*Revisiting: Notes on the Liturgy 2*

## Time

*In* the Liturgy, past, present and future intersect, and our true relationship with time is revealed to us. This is most noticeable in the Eucharist where we remember and make present Christ's death and resurrection, celebrate his presence to us now in Word, Sacrament and Fellowship, and declare our faith in his future coming again in glory, but it is true of any liturgical act.

We are reminded of this intersection the moment the liturgy begins with the procession of the ministers, which mirrors a typical first century group of well to do Romans or Greeks on their way to a dinner party. The torchbearers light the way, the crucifer carries the family standard or emblem, the incense marks the event as festive and protect the party from any unpleasant first-century odors!

All are clothed in archaic garb: all the ministers wear in *albs*, simple white tunics, the common street garment of the Roman world, and the clerics colored *stoles*, or scarves. *Dalmatics* and *chasubles* in the appropriate liturgical colors, are worn by deacons and priests respectively, the Greco-Roman equivalent of formal evening wear. All this clearly plants us firmly in the past.

Moreover, though the basic patterns and forms remain Greco-Roman, every age since has left its mark. There is a wide variety of cuts and decorative motifs that reflect Early and Late Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Neo-Gothic and 20<sup>th</sup> century fashions, and our age too, of course has its own styles. The choir's robes, for example, reflect medieval developments.

Even at this very basic level of clothing then the Liturgy makes the past present to us. But it also, in a very real way, links us to our future. Because we can be pretty

***To page 2***

***From page 1***

sure that, barring the Second Coming, on Sunday mornings 100, or 500 or even 1000 years from today, a gathered people will be rising for the entrance of a procession of ministers that we would recognize at once, however different the circumstances, in order to celebrate, as we do this morning, the Death, Resurrection and Coming-Again of the same Jesus Christ, our Lord and theirs. We are all, past, present and future, one people on the one Journey and that, in the true sense of the word, is awesome.

And this liturgical embrace of time is not confined to Sundays, or doesn't need to be, and our prayer life can be substantially enriched if we learn to live in the world according to liturgical rather than secular time. That means being aware and praying in the context of the Seasons, the Feasts and the Fasts of the Church year, and observing the communal practices traditionally associated with them. This enriches our prayer by adding a communal dimension to it, reminding that we never really pray alone; we pray as members of the Body of Christ.

Of course we mark the Seasons on Sundays at church, but how do we take them home with us? How do we incorporate them into our prayer life? How do we practice 'waiting' in Advent? How do we make sure that our celebration of Christmas is a celebration of God's great gift to us in Christ? What do we do between Ash Wednesday and Holy Week to remind us daily that we are preparing for Easter? How do we live our Holy Week? Do we celebrate the 50 days of Easter with the joy we should? Do we observe Fridays throughout the year (except in Christmas and Eastertide) as days of abstinence, as suggested by the Book of Common Prayer? More on that perhaps next week.

And the Feasts of Saints, the celebration of the heroes of our faith, we tend to forget them, unless we cram them all together into a crowded Sunday.

There are several ways of incorporating all these things into our daily lives. One of the most effective means is the daily recitation of Morning and/or Evening Prayer (Matins and Evensong) according the Book of Common Prayer, a custom, which is spreading among the laity in many countries.

## **SAINTS OF THE WEEK:**

**Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Society of Jesus, 31 July.** Born in 1491, the son of a Basque nobleman, Ignatius served as a soldier and was wounded at the siege of Pamplona in 1521. During his convalescence he read a Life of Christ, was converted and lived a life of prayer and penance, during which he wrote the first draft of his Spiritual Exercises. He gathered six disciples, and together they took vows of poverty and chastity and promised to serve the Church either by preaching in Palestine or in other ways that the Pope thought fit. By 1540, Ignatius had won papal approval for his embryonic order and the Society of Jesus was born. For the next sixteen years he directed the work of the Jesuits as it spread around the world, until his sudden death on this day in 1556.

**Oswald of Northumbria, 5 August.** Born around the year 605, the son of King Ælfrith of Northumbria, Oswald was forced to leave home after his father's death and move to Iona where, influenced by the monks of St Columba, he was baptised. Returning to Northumbria in 634, Oswald defeated the British king, setting up a cross as his standard and gathering his men around it to pray the night before the battle. A man of humility and generosity, Oswald worked closely with his friend St Aidan, travelling with him on his missionary journeys and acting as his interpreter. He died in battle on this day in 642 defending his kingdom from the Mercians.