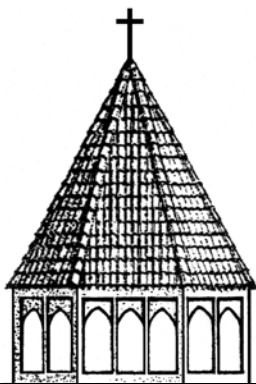


# WINNOWING FAN

The Spiritual Life according to the Fathers and Saints of the Catholic Church in preparation for Christ's Second Coming.

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## THE LITURGICAL YEAR

The Catholic Church has her own calendar in which is laid down the lesson plan she has in teaching Her faithful. This lesson plan is so arranged as to teach the faithful in an orderly form, where truths are presented in the proper order with some check and balance in which Catholics can know in what stage they are.

In what stage a soul is we cannot know for certain but we can know it to some extent. The Church has a Liturgical Calendar laid out in three cycles. They are essentially teaching the same doctrines but using the different books of the Gospel.

These are the General topics: 1.) the Advent Sundays, 2.) Christmas Season, 3.) Epiphany, 4.) Lenten Season 5.) Holy Week, 6.) Easter Season 7.) Pentecost 8.) Feast of Christ the King. The other feasts

would fall under the above general topics.

Now let us see what doctrines are taught during each season.

During the 1.) Advent Season, the doctrine of the Life of Repentance as taught in the Old Testament is reviewed but as perfected in the New Testament. So, Repentance in the O. T. which was a preparation for the First Coming of Christ is perfected into Repentance as a preparation for the Second Coming of Christ. This is why the Gospels of the Sundays of Advent are about the Second Coming of Christ and not for his First Coming on Christmas day. The Ascetical practices that are taught to us during Advent are: a.) to know all our sins by checking them with the commandments of Christ as listed in the New Testament b.) by

condemning ourselves and c.) by punishing ourselves through a life of fasting of the senses. The goal of the life of repentance as taught during Advent is to enable us to have our past sins forgiven. John the Baptist taught us to have the right disposition so that Christ can forgive our sins in the New Testament.

Next comes 2.) the Christmas Season. Christ shows us how by His birth His Church would look like. The Church would be made up of Himself, His father Joseph and Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary. So we have the gospels on St. Joseph and Mary, the mother of God. And we also have the gospels on the shepherds and the Magi. All of them constitute the primal Catholic Church, the foreshadowing of Pentecost. Having taught us the Life of Repentance that earns us the forgiveness of sins and how to look for the humanity of Christ and finding the divinity of Christ behind His humanity, we see the Magi preaching to their countrymen what they have seen and heard....this foreshadows the events of Pentecost and post-Pentecost when the Apostles were commissioned to go to all nations to preach.

The events between the feast of the Epiphany up to the Lenten Season can be described as a transition period crossing from the

Life of Repentance of the O.T to the Life of Faith in the N. T. Holy Mother the Church is giving us a bird's eye view in summary form of what we must do to merit eternal life...which will be explained in detail beginning in the season of Lent. This transition period will consist of 9 Sundays.

The 9 Sundays before Lent.

The 9 Sundays of Lent describes the 6 major stages in the ascetical life..

First Sunday: after we have repented we receive Sanctifying grace, a gift from God received at Baptism. So the Mass was about the Baptism of Our Lord by John the Baptist.

Second Sunday: Together with the grace received at Baptism, we received the Theological virtue of Faith by which we recognize the humanity of Christ and learn His commandments.

Third Sunday: Signs that the apostles received the virtue of Faith in that they were able to leave boats, nets and their father. They cannot leave all things without the grace of Faith.

Fourth Sunday: The initial Faith of the apostles matures in the different stages of the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are the stages of Faith and Hope, leading to the perfection of Charity. Many are called only towards the first

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The *Winnowing Fan* hopes "...to do what little it  
could to solve the evils that beset the Church."  
St. Teresa of Avila

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Beatitude which is sufficient to attain the kingdom of heaven. But the apostles, because of their high and honored mission are helped to rise to the higher Beatitudes towards the perfection of Charity.

Fifth Sunday : When the first apostles were raised to the perfection of the Beatitude, in an extraordinary way they became the Salt of the earth and the Light of the world.

The Sixth, Seventh, Eight and Ninth Sunday describe the Life of Perfection to which all are called. These four Sundays repeat our obligation to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect. We cannot aim at anything less.

Sixth Sunday: The Gospel presents the Old Testament commands with its perfect version in the New Testament.

Seventh Sunday: The Gospel presents the most perfect act of love consisting in love of enemies.

Eight Sunday: The Gospel presents the two masters and shows that a perfect soul is one who serves only one master.

Ninth Sunday: The Gospel presents again two men. A wise man who builds his house on rock and a foolish man who builds his house on sand. It tells us that the wise man is the perfect man who, like the perfect model Christ, builds his house, as Christ built His church, on rock.

After this transitional period of 9 Sundays the Liturgical year resumes by going back to the first step, the Life of Repentance as taught in the O.T. but perfected in the N.T. in the season of Lent. After Repentance the Church teaches us what is Faith during Holy Week, Hope during Easter and Charity on Pentecost.

Between Pentecost and Christ the King there are more than 30 Sundays wherein Holy Mother the Church explains to us the signs by which we can know if we are inside or outside the Catholic Church. And if we find ourselves outside the Church, then the next cycle of the Liturgical Year will teach again how to be a Catholic.

Sometimes, when I read spiritual treatises . . . my poor little mind soon grows weary, I close the learned book which leaves my head splitting and my heart parched, and I take the Holy Scriptures. Then all seems luminous, a single word opens up infinite horizons to my soul.

St. Therese of Lisieux

## assent & consent in the ACT OF FAITH PART TWO

The soul has two faculties, the intellect and the free will. The intellect tends to get its object and draw it into itself thus changing the form of the object from a merely material object into a spiritual object. For example; if the intellect thinks of a table, the concept of the table in the mind is spiritual. If the head is split open there will be no table in the mind because the table that was material in the world becomes spiritual when thought of in the mind.

It is different with the free will. When the free will loves its object the will leaves and goes towards the object of its love and either experiences it or is united to that object.

The same goes with God. When we think of God we tend to bring God down to the limited confines of our intellect. And so our concept of God becomes limited. God comes into the limited confines of our mind.

On the other hand when we love God with our free will, we go out of

ourselves and go to the unlimited Being of God.

In the Act of Faith, when our intellect knows God, God approaches us in the limited confines of our mind. And as we study more and more about God, He approaches more and more our limited mind but keeping some distance between us and Him. So we say we begin to see an image of God. And the image becomes clearer.

But in the Act of Faith, when we love God with our free will we approach God in His vastness until such time that as we approach Him He is experienced and becomes more and more alive to us keeping His promise in the Gospel: "I shall manifest Myself to him."

**When we are linked by the power of prayer, we, as it were, hold each other's hand as we walk side by side along a slippery path; and thus by the bounteous disposition of charity, it comes about that the harder each one leans on the other, the more firmly we are riveted together in brotherly love.**

St. Gregory the Great

