

## Pastor Lessons

### Lesson 33

## The Church Year Calendar

### What is the Church Year?

The “liturgical” year, also known as the Christian Year, consists of the cycle of (Liturgy/liturgical) seasons in Christian churches which determines when Feast, Memorials, commemorations, etc... are to be observed and which portions of Scripture are to be read. Very distinct liturgical colors may appear in connection with different seasons of the liturgical year.

The dates of the festivals vary somewhat between the Western and Eastern Orthodox Churches, though the sequence and logic is the same. In both the East and the West the dates of many “feast” or “celebrations” vary from year to year, though in almost all cases this is due to the variation in the **Date of Easter**, and all other dates follow from that. Also between churches, the extent to which the “fasts” and festivals are celebrated also varies between churches.

### Diving Deeper into the Liturgical Cycle

The Liturgical cycle dives the year into a series of seasons, each with their own mood, theological emphases, and modes of prayer. There can also be a significant difference in how the church is decorated, vestments for clergy, scriptural readings, themes for preaching, etc... For churches that follow the liturgical year, the scripture passages for each Sunday are specified by a list called a **lectionary**.

### What are our seasons of celebration in our church body?

Generally, the liturgical season in Western Christianity are Advent, Easter, Lent, Christmas, Ordinary Time (time after Epiphany), Ordinary Time (Time after Pentecost or after Trinity).

**PASTORS: Please see attached sheet “A” for a better Break Down of the seasons! Remember we are discussing HOLY WEEK NEXT LESSON—so don’t detail Holy Week too much!**

### Advent

- \*Means arrival or coming

- \*Focuses on the coming of the Christ child

- \*First season of the liturgical year begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve

- \*Most often celebrated with an advent wreath —marks progression of time—sometimes meaning given to each candle such as Hope, Faith, Joy, and love.

- \*Blue is most often represented as Advent Color

## **Christmas**

- \*Christmas celebration starts on Christmas and goes to the Feast of Epiphany on January 6
- \*Christmas Day on the 25
- \*12 days of Christmas actually begin on Christmas day, INSTEAD of ending on it like retailers would have you believe.
- \*Color can be white or gold

## **Epiphany**

Ordinary Time begins after the Epiphany. Epiphany season begins on the Eve of Epiphany (on Jan 6 or nearest Sunday.

Ordinary Time-Means the counted weeks (Commons weeks that don't belong to a "proper season.")

Basically, means time after Epiphany

Color Typically Green

## **Lent**

- \*Preparation for Easter
  - \*Begins on Ash Wednesday (we will discuss Holy Week Next week) and ends on Holy Saturday at the end of Holy Week
  - \*Forty days of Lent (six Sundays in Lent not counted)
  - \*During lent Alleluia omitted from service
  - \*Readings focus on the "Passion of Christ"
  - \*Includes Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, ends
- Various Colors appear during Lent---Black, Purple, White, etc...
- WE WILL TALK MORE NEXT WEEK ABOUT HOLY WEEK

## **Easter**

- \*Easter celebrates Jesus' Resurrection
- \*Extends from Easter Vigil through Pentecost Sunday
- \*Alleluia Chorus song to welcome this word (and its meaning) back into Christian Worship

Includes the celebration of Ascension OF Our Lord and Pentecost

\*Colors are White

**Ordinary time Resumes after Easter Season and continues to the Saturday before the First Sunday of Advent.**

**PLEASE HAND OUT LESSON SHEET "B" FOR EXPLANATION OF LITURGICAL COLORS**

**QUESTIONS**