

Start of Something New

As December rolls in, our holiday spirit is on high and at the top of our head we know its Christmas time once again! It's that time of the year when we think about all the dazzling lights wrapped around the Christmas tree, holiday dinners with family and friends, eggnog, Christmas Carols on repeat, and of course Christmas gifts. Ask a Christian about December and Christmas and the answer would be the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus. Although this celebration culminates on the 24th and 25th of December, prior to Christmas there is a special time dedicated to prepare ourselves. In the liturgical calendar it is referred to as the Advent season. The exact start of Advent tends to move around depending on when the four Sundays before Christmas is. It so happens that this year it is spot on December 1.

The Advent season ushers in the beginning of the Western liturgical calendar. You might have noticed that the lectionary as well as the Gospel readings on that Sunday all have something in common, which is the recurring themes of "*anticipation*" and "*preparation*". The first reading builds up the joyous mood and the sense of expectation for the coming of the Glory of God, while the second reading follows up with instructions on how we should prepare ourselves. We might think that every December we commemorate the birth of Jesus, and this repetition might have corroded its meaning and our own Spiritual attentiveness. In order to escape this tedium, we must grasp that we are also preparing ourselves for the Second Coming of Christ - which might be closer than we all think. Upon this realization, hopefully you will all agree that in fact this mindset of "*anticipation*" and "*preparation*" go well beyond just the Advent season and becomes an ongoing endeavor no matter the season in the liturgical calendar. In fact, the apostle Paul spoke with urgency about the Second Coming of Jesus in Romans 13:11, "**For our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed**". That was almost 2,000 years ago, imagine how much closer we are now.

Now that we have established Advent as the beginning, we should also understand the overall structure and the history behind the liturgical calendar. The church year is deeply rooted in the impulse of primitive mankind to mark the times of the year based on special meanings and sacred rituals. These include the cycles of nature and the cycles of life. Fast forward to Christianity, we observe and honor the life, death, resurrection, and ministry of Christ. Although the calendar has gone through numerous updates and revisions, the two greatest revisions were made in the 16th century during the Church reformation, and in the 20th century during the Second Vatican Council. We still currently use the version produced by the Second Vatican Council under Pope John VI. Perhaps the most important highlight from this update is the formal recognition of all Sundays as feasts of Christ. No other saints' days - including the Virgin Mary - may take precedence on a given Sunday. In its latest incarnation, the church year contains the following seasons - in sequential order - Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Triduum (The Three Great Days), Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. All other Sundays in between these seasons follow the normal mass rite known as Ordinary Time. There are 33 Ordinary Sundays per year and the Lectionary (mass readings) follow a three year cycle marked as A, B, C. In cycle A we use the Gospel of Matthew as the primary reading, in cycle B the Gospel of Mark, and in cycle C we predominantly refer to Luke. We have just passed cycle C this year and will enter into cycle A in 2020. The key aspect of Ordinary time the focus of the Liturgy of the Word is devoted to the mysteries around the life of Christ.

Of all the seasons, we recognize Easter as the climax because of its focus on Christ's selfless sacrifice for our sins and His triumph over death - the centerpiece of our faith. Before Easter comes, we enter into the 40-day liturgical season called Lent. The initiation of the most sacred segment of the Christian year begins on Ash Wednesday and goes all the way until Holy Thursday. Similar to Advent, Lent is a time of preparation for Catholics and it calls for an even deeper appreciation. This is the time where we meditate on the Paschal mystery with wonder and gratefulness for God's salvation through the suffering, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus. This is also why Lent is usually a time where we must fast. Though we may never emulate Christ's 40 days of fasting in the desert, we should mirror the endeavor by foregoing the worldly things that we desire the most and persevere in the temptation. For some, this task might be cumbersome and difficult but in reality it would never be as hard as Jesus' ultimate sacrifice of dying on the cross for us. For starters, we would never have to bleed for our own sins let alone the sins of others. We simply have to repent and truly undergo a transformation towards the righteous way of God. Only then will the fruits of repentance be truly produced. From this perspective, we shouldn't just fast and repent during Lent but continuously no matter the seasons in the liturgical calendar. Perhaps the seasons would serve as excellent precursors for our decision to repent, put to death our sinful ways, and don the armor of holiness in preparation for the eventual Second Coming of Christ.

In closing remarks, as Catholics we should at least take the time to learn more about the dense significance of the liturgical calendar and all the distinctive rituals. The last thing that we want is to simply treat it like any other secular calendars, devoid of any meaning. All the components contained within the Liturgical seasons have been crafted to increasingly inspire and align us to the way Jesus thinks and behave. Ultimately, we all strive for spiritual growth in Christ. Therefore, the next time we go through the Church year, we should truly pay our utmost attention, open our hearts, and immerse ourselves in the experience. Eventually, Christ as the center of Liturgy will nurture us from the roots, to the branches, to the leaves, and eventually the fruits of the Spirit.

Andrew Lazaro
Head of CFJ Lectors



Get Involved !

CFJ Bible Fellowship

Wednesday, 7 PM

Venue : Will be broadcasted weekly

Contact Person :

Kelvin Sutandar (+62 812-8183-4550)

CFJ Choir Practice

Tuesday, 7 PM

Venue : Ambiente Jln. Senopati no. 70

Contact Person :

Fransiska Darmawan
(+62 812-8183-4550)

CFJ Kids

Weekly Sunday School, 11 AM

Venue : Gereja Katolik St.Perawan

Maria Ratu (Blok Q Church)

Contact Person :

Krista Oen (+62 813-8108-9798)
Friska Ruslim (+62 812-6743-218)

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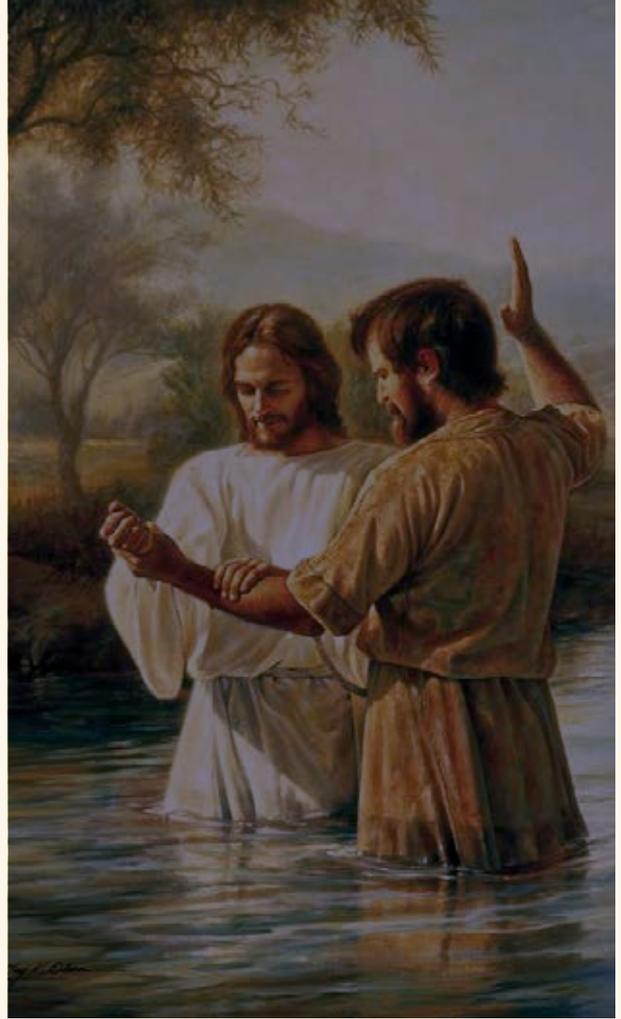
BAPTISM

in Catholic

There are 7 main sacraments of the church, in which Baptism is one of it. Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism, we are called and obliged by the Lord to a new obedience. As found in the Book of Praise 1984, it is stated: "When we are baptized into the Name of the Father, God the Father testifies and seals to us that He establishes an eternal covenant of grace with us. He adopts us for His children and heirs, and promises to provide us with all food and avert all evil."

Always, Baptism is seen as connected with faith. The meaning and grace of this sacrament of Baptism are spotted in the rites of its celebration. The essential rite of Baptism consists in immersing the candidate in water or pouring water on his head, while pronouncing the invocation of the most Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The sign of the cross as the opening of the sacrament marks with the imprint of Christ the one who is going to belong to him. The baptismal water is consecrated by a prayer, asks through his Son the power of Holy Spirit may be sent upon the water, so that those who will be baptized in it may be born of water and the Spirit. The white garment symbolizes that the person baptized has "put on Christ". The candle then signifies that Christ has enlightened the neophyte. In Him, the baptized are "the light of the world."

The first Holy Communion signifies the receipt of the food of new life, the body and blood of Christ. Baptism is deemed as a necessity as the Lord himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation. He also commands his disciples to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and to baptize them. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Mt 28:19-20).



The fruit of Baptism, or Baptismal grace, is rich and includes renewal, the forgiveness of sins (original and personal), birth into the new life, making those who baptized a new creature, a child of God. Through Baptism, which is God's most beautiful and magnificent gift, we become members of the Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made shares in the missions. While the Risen Christ commanded the disciples to baptize all people, Baptism is also a sign for repentance like the prophets before them (Acts 2:38-39). In addition, the person baptized is configured to Christ. Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible spiritual mark of his belonging to Christ. The faithful who have received this sacrament also enables and commits to serve God and to exercise their baptismal values in daily lives. The Holy Spirit also marked the baptized for the day of redemption. Although, to be understood is that baptismal life is not free of struggle/sacrifice. It is a commitment to take up the cross and follow Jesus, working in grace to put all that is evil and sinful to death and to bring what is good and holy to birth.

To summarize, the baptized has to live a life of Christian discipleship. Our baptism becomes visible in our lives when we live by the word of Christ to us with faith, obedience, hope and love. And as often as we fall, we need to be reminded that for all the baptized, faith must grow continuously after Baptism.

Ingrid Chai

CFJ Praise & Worship and Youth Catechist

Dear Daddy D,

What is the difference between a liturgical year and a normal calendar year? Since Catholics use both does that mean I can celebrate my birthday twice?

- Birthday Ben

Got any questions ?

Email Daddy at info@cfjakarta.com

Dear BB,

Unfortunately having two different calendars does not mean you get to celebrate your birthday twice. The Church's liturgical calendar/ year refers to the events and holy days in our Church: in general, it is divided into the Advent period, the Christmas period, the Lent period, the Easter period, with the Ordinary period covering the remaining weeks and several Holy Days of Obligations cropping up every now and then.

Our liturgical year opens with the First Sunday of advent, and ends with the Feast of Christ the King, with the Lent and Easter period somewhere in the middle. What are the significance of the different periods, you ask? Other than the fact that they are for preparing and celebrating the two important event in our faith (Christmas and Easter), they also have several distinct practices in terms of our mass, e.g. the Gloria is not sung, different Eucharistic Prayers are used, etc. A fun fact about our liturgical calendar is that we have 3 types: A-B-C for Sundays, and 2 types: I-II for weekdays.

This variation is distinguished by the different readings, by which if you attend mass every day for 3 years straight (Sunday mass and daily mass), you will have heard the whole Bible being read at mass!



HAVE A
Merry Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR

Guess the Sacraments!



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.





The Church, A Family



Catholic youth usually gets their confirmation in their teenage years, yet somehow during those years I felt reluctant and saw no point in doing so. Fast forward and double the age, my spiritual health is another story. From being reluctant to watch sermons, I now watch them and read devotionals every night. This newfound strength came from a painful place of past relationships, yet it is through those hurtful times Jesus brings us closer to him. This confirmation signifies renewed spiritual life and from hereon I hope to always be close to Jesus Christ our savior no matter where life takes me.

Vicitra Maengkom
CFJ Choir & Usher Member

“ How do you feel being baptized and/or confirmed and what is the significance of it in your life? ”



My baptism brought a feeling that I never experienced before. Initially I struggled with RCIA, but over time I managed to understand the value of it. Because of this, during my baptism I was full of emotions. I realized that I had made a conscious decision as an adult to make a commitment to Jesus.

From the moment we concluded the baptism mass, I was overwhelmed with joy. I realized that I am now a part of a new family. I felt the warmth from all the love and support that my friends had given to me leading up to my baptism.

However, most importantly, on that day I felt God's presence more than any other. I thought about how I am able to stand here today despite the low points in my past, because he has loved me all my life, and now I have the opportunity to love him back.

The significance my baptism has on my life is very important. Personally, I had been hesitant to be involved in ministries. However, since my baptism I have the urge to be involved. Being involved sometimes gives me a similar feeling of joy that I felt on my baptism day.

Wilson Angryanto
CFJ Member active in Ushers & Bible Fellowship