

Liturgical Seasons

When I first planned to do this weekly piece as inspired by the Parish council for Catechesis, I anticipated that I would simply begin at the beginning of the Order of the Mass and work my way through each action and element one by one. However, I find myself drawn to a somewhat different approach, and so last week I talked about the Advent Wreath we use during the Advent Season. Similarly, this week I will say a bit about how and why we observe and celebrate the various liturgical times and seasons. Last week I mentioned what is called the *sacramental principle* as characteristic of our Catholic way of prayer. It says, simply put, that something of God the creator of all can be known in and through the many gifts of creation, such as water, bread, wine, oil, human love and friendship, and so on. Even the different and ever changing seasons of the year can be “used” to speak to us of and celebrate our life and relationship with God in Christ. So, for instance, the spring of the year when the earth “returns to life” {at least in the northern hemisphere} speaks of the new life in Christ that is ours in Baptism. And placing the season of Lent in the transitional time of late winter and early spring expresses our need and effort to be delivered – transitioned - from our old dead ways in preparation for that new life. We don’t celebrate Christmas on December 25 because that is the actual, historical date of Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem, but because the winter solstice {December 21st} has just passed, and daylight begins to lengthen again, just as we celebrate the birth and rebirth of Christ the Light of the world on Christmas. In these and many other ways the Church “uses” even the seasons and features of the natural world to express the realities of our life in God.

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about.
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