

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Parishioners,

As the liturgical year comes to an end, at least where our Sunday Masses are concerned, we take leave of one evangelist and move on to hearing the Jesus story recounted by another. We take leave of Mark and throughout the new Church year, which opens on the First Sunday of Advent, it is the voice of Luke that we hear when the gospel is proclaimed. It is worth reflecting, as we part company with him for two years, what we have learned from Mark. He was the first to tell the story of Jesus. He was in a hurry to make Jesus known far and wide, but he was also keen that the record he provided was accurate and faithful to the facts with which eyewitnesses had made him acquainted. His is the shortest of the four gospels, its pace is fast, its style telegraphic. Matthew and Luke include virtually everything we find in Mark so it is obvious that, in writing their own gospels, they turned to Mark whose account they considered authoritative. Scripture scholars tell us that the Gospel of Mark was destined for the Christians in Rome and that it was associated with the mission of Peter.

As we close Mark and open the Gospel of Luke, it is useful to ask ourselves how much of the narrative we have been exposed to on the Sundays of Ordinary Time over the past year we remember? What impression has this account made on us? Does it communicate enthusiasm for the message of Jesus; does it carry the conviction that conversion was urgent, that salvation was near? When we open the New Testament, to which Gospel do we turn? Even a provisional answer to these questions suggests that we are reflecting on the message and attempting to integrate it into our daily faith lives.

Fr. Patrick

