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I admit that I am a complete failure when it comes to time management. Even though I’ve experienced things multiple times (such as getting ready for the day, driving to town, making a pit stop for milk or bread, etc.,) I somehow think that THIS time it won’t take so long. Or, THIS time I’ll be able to get this, this, AND this done before I have to leave or whatever time-relevant activity I’m involved in begins. Depending on how much help I do or do not get from my kids and/or husband, the traffic and driving conditions, how many tasks I try to complete in the name of efficiency, or any other number of affecters, sometimes I am on time. More often than not, I’m late. Punctuality is a huge pet peeve for many people. I understand that. I wish it was more so for me. Some people think that my tardiness is a sign of disrespect. I disagree on that. My “disrespect” is usually just a result of me trying to do too much in too little time. Maybe it’s a symptom of my need to control situations, my depression, my self-destructive tendencies, or my lack of self-control. Trust me though when I say it’s not disrespect. But time always has and always will dictate much in society.

In the Church, we tell time via the liturgical calendar. Each “new” year leads us through a cycle of anticipation during Advent, the birth of Jesus and the Christmas season, Ordinary time (which is NOT a plain, boring, unremarkable time, but rather *ordinal*, that is “numbered”, ie- the 25th week of Ordinary Time,) the season of Lent (a time of spiritual reflection, self-control, and purification,) and Easter (the period where we celebrate the Passion of Christ, His crucifixion, and resurrection and the fulfillment of God’s promises to mankind.) The liturgical year is not a timeline of Jesus’ life. It is “a way of interpreting, organizing, and marking time, and as such can be considered sacramental. Time itself is drawn into the redeeming work of Christ which took place and takes place in time, and which continues until time is no more, until ‘sacraments shall cease.’ Furthermore,…the liturgical year can be considered sacramental. …The various cycles, feasts and days of the liturgical year are associated with ‘sacramentals.’” Sacred signs are bound to holy times. For example, Advent calendars are united with the season preparing for Jesus’ birth, ashes are tied to Ash Wednesday, and the crucifix is associated with Good Friday. The liturgical year is not a repetition of, nor a return to, past events; you cannot go back in time. But because the celebration of the Mass is a re-presenting, an ongoing, ever-current actuality of the Paschal Mystery, it is available to us as it was, is now, and ever shall be. (Seasons & Feasts of the Church Year, Michael D. Whalen, pgs. 10-16)

Next Sunday, December 1st, is the First Sunday of Advent. It’s the beginning of our new liturgical year. We’ll be using the readings of Year A for this next 52 weeks. Advent means “coming.” Jesus is “coming” on December 25th. We are to prepare for His arrival. You’ll notice that the color of the season changes from the green of Ordinary time to purple, a color associated with penance. Prayer, penance, and fasting are appropriate for this season. While not as strict as during Lent, one should fast during the first 2 weeks in particular and be sure to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Week three begins with Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means “rejoice.” The colors of the priest’s vestments and the church linens will change to rose for the week. This color symbolizes joy and tells of the happiness we have in the anticipatory celebration of Jesus’ incarnation. I hope that you will take some time to prepare yourself during Advent. You can begin by joining us for Faith Formation after this weekend’s K of C Pancake Breakfast. We will meet in Fellowship Hall around 12:45 pm. This is our GIFT class so be prepared to work with someone from a generation different from your own. Let’s build those relationships as we create Advent calendars for our homes.

Blessings,

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