



Tips for Preaching to the Year A Sunday readings

Clergy Formation Session

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How do heaven and earth relate?

Modern world view: Two options

Option one: pantheism – the divine is in everything. God's space and our space is the same (ancient Stoicism).

Option two: the divine and humans live in separate spaces and God is far away (17th and 18th century Deism, ancient Epicureanism) – rooted in Platonic thought: the disembodied soul continues after death and is happily separated from the body.





What does the Bible say about
heaven and earth?

Modern world view:

Heaven is where our disembodied souls go after we die.

The final destination for believers.

The Bible offers a third option:

heaven and earth overlap and

interlock.

The overlapping and interlocking of heaven and earth

In the Old Testament

- Genesis 1-2: “And God looked at everything he made and found it very good. Thus, the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed.”
- God’s original plan for the two spaces of heaven and earth overlapping and interlocking.
- Heaven and earth as God’s **original Temple** and humans as the image-bearers.





The overlapping and interlocking of heaven and earth

In the New Testament

- Revelation 21-22: “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.” And “Behold, God’s dwelling is with the human race...He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away.”
- God’s new creation for the overlapping and interlocking heaven and earth – **Temple restored.**

What's wrong
with the world?

Different kinds of evil

- Natural Evil
- Political Evil
- Moral Evil

Modern world view:
The problem of
evil & suffering





What does the Bible say about evil?

Modern world view: The devil does not exist

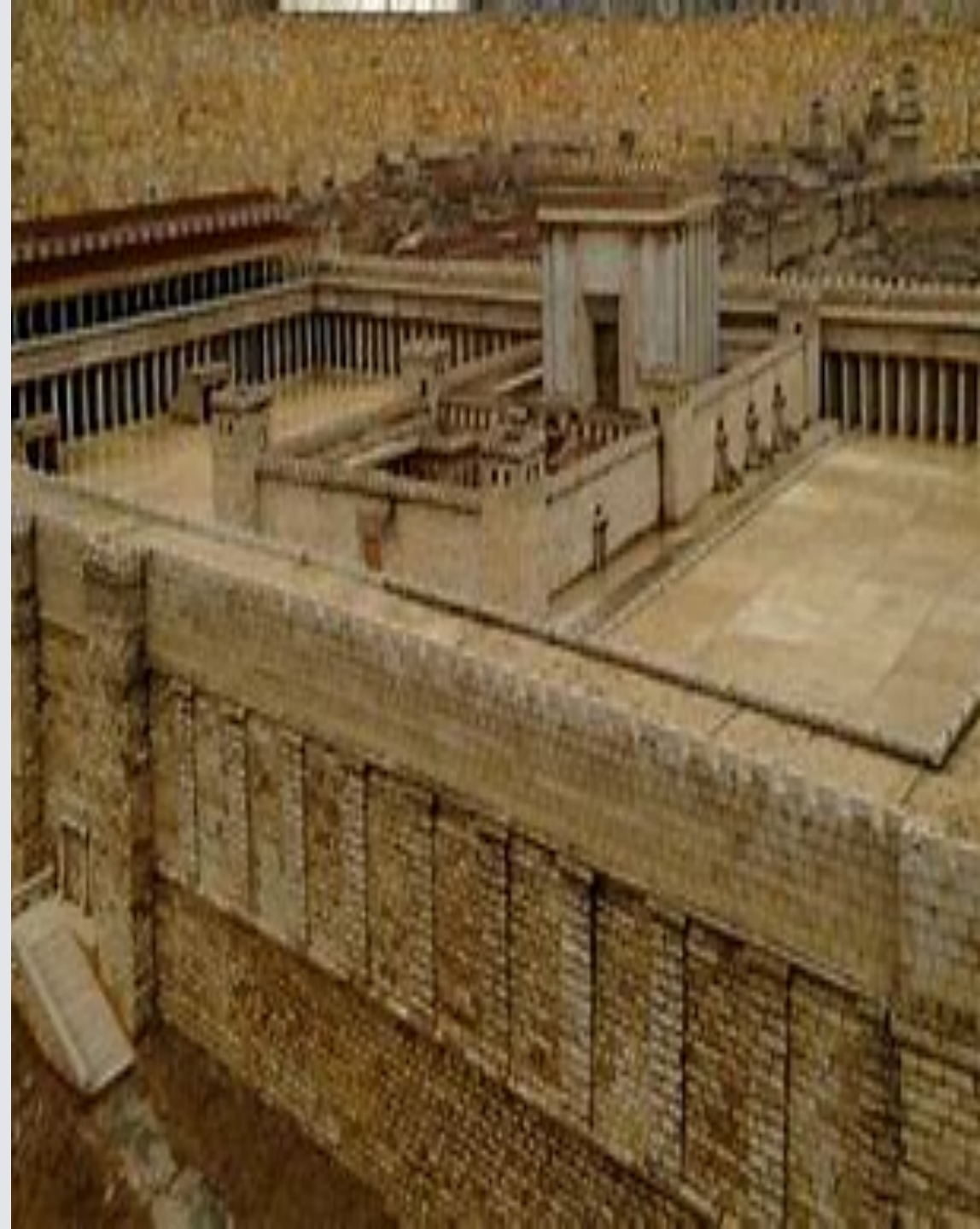
- The Bible speaks of a fourth kind of evil beyond natural, political and moral evil.
- Demonic evil.
- M. Scott Peck, *The People of the Lie* (1985).
- Modern science and technology have no answer to demonic evil – just denial.
- Demonic evil is fueled by human *idolatry*.

Some contextual comments on the Bible

- Since the Reformation period (16th century), we have “de-Judaized” the New Testament, reaching its peak in the 20th century.
 - “American Catholicism” is deeply rooted in 17th & 18th century Deism and Epicureanism (religion of the Founding Fathers).
 - Since the Enlightenment period (18th-19th century), we have been obsessed with the historical-critical (granular) methodology to study the Bible.
 - As a result, many Christians have lost the sense of the overarching narrative from Gen 1-2 to Rev 21-22.
- Consequentially:
 - We have Platonized our eschatology.
(soul escaping earth vs. new heaven and new earth)
 - We have moralized our anthropology.
(right behavior vs. God-image bearers)
 - As a result of both... we have paganized our soteriology.
(angry God who wants appeasement vs. John 3:16)

The Second Temple period (516BC to 70AD)

- The sects of Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots and early Christianity were formed during this period.
- The “Old Testament” (Torah, the Prophets and the Psalms) came together in their final form during this period. But many Jews believed God had not yet returned to his Temple.
- The prophet Daniel (9:24-26) prophesied the Lord and his glory would return 490 years after the Babylonian Exile (post-538BC).
- The preaching of John the Baptist and the start of Jesus’ public ministry (26-30 AD) heightened the Messianic expectation of God’s return to the Temple.





Where does Jesus fit into the world of Israel's narrative, "in accordance with the Scriptures"?


Five major assertions

1. Something happened on Good Friday that changed the world: "It is finished" (John 19:30).
2. In Jesus' death, the dark forces and powers of evil were defeated once and for all.
3. God's new creation was launched on Easter Sunday.
4. Jesus and the cross (not the 17th & 18th century Enlightenment) are "the crossroads of history."
5. In the cross and resurrection, the story of Israel comes to a climax and God reveals his faithfulness to his covenantal promises and to his creation.

Gospel of Matthew: theology, history and literature

- For Matthew, Jesus is the climax of Israel's Scriptures: God fulfills his promise to Abraham by sending the Davidic Messiah, who will rescue people from their exile (the result of sins) – thus a new exodus, a new covenant, and a new creation.
- Matthew's Gospel displays a diverse and complex use of Israel's Scriptures: 13 fulfillment quotations, another sixty explicit OT quotations, and over 100 indirect OT allusions.





the
Gospel
according to
Matthew

Gospel of Matthew: theology, history and literature

- 🕒 Matthew was the most frequently cited Gospel by the early Christian writers (Origen, Jerome, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, etc.) because of its seamless and intentional connection between the Jesus-event and Israel's Scriptures.
- 🕒 In a real way, Matthew exemplifies *Dei Verbum* 4.16.
- 🕒 For this reason, the Church Fathers placed Matthew first when the fourfold Gospel canon was later assembled.
- 🕒 The Gospel of Matthew is the response to ancient *and* modern “Marcionite” readings of the NT.

Gospel of Matthew: theology, history and literature

- “Matthew is a *fresh edition* of Mark, revised, rearranged, and enriched with new material.” F.C. Burkitt, 1922
- Other sources for Matthew included the Old Testament, eye-witnesses, and M-source material.
- Written soon after Mark (post-70 AD), 80-85 AD from (?) Antioch in Syria.
- Matthew is writing an *apology* (Jesus is the one “faithful” to Israel’s ancestral calling & heritage) and a *manual* for discipleship (a church living as a minority group in a hostile majority culture).





The Gospel of Matthew in Year A (2022-2023)

Advent	Dec. 4-24
Christmas	Dec. 25-Jan.8
Ordinary Time I	Jan.15-Feb. 25
Lent	Feb. 26-Apr. 2
Triduum and Easter	Apr. 6-May 28
Ordinary Time II	Jun. 4-Nov. 26

CELEBRATING

Advent

★

THE COMING OF THE
MESSIAH

Season of Advent: Anticipating the “coming” of Jesus

Sunday Gospel readings for Advent (Year A)

- Mt 24:37-44 The unknown day and hour
- Mt 3:1-12 Preaching of John the Baptist
- Mt 11:2-11 Jesus and John
- Mt 1:18-24 Birth of Jesus, Israel’s Messiah

Advent: the “eschaton”
– announcing God’s
new future

Mt 24:37-44 The unknown day and hour

Advent begins each year with the eschatological reminder that God is in charge, and that fact calls us to an examination of conscience.



Advent: John the Baptist

– announcing God’s new future

Mt 3:1-12 Preaching of John the Baptist

- 🕒 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” – Mt 3:2
- 🕒 “The kingdom of heaven”: God is coming to claim his sovereign rule over the world and creation.
- 🕒 Matthew aligns John with Isaiah (40:3), Elijah (2 Kgs 1:8), and Zechariah (13:4).

Repentance (*metanoia* = from rebellion to obedience) is the required disposition for God’s new future, coming kingdom.



Advent: Jesus and John the Baptist – announcing
God's new future

Mt 11:2-11 Jesus and John

- “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?”
- “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight...” (Is 26:19; 29:18-19; 35:5-6; 61:1)
- “There is none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

In God's new future, announcing the imminence of God's kingdom arriving is less than actually belonging to God's coming kingdom.





**Advent: Birth of Israel's Messiah
announcing God's new future**

Mt 1:18-24 Birth of Jesus

- 🕒 Joseph's dream sequences recall Gen 37, the dreams of Joseph, son of Jacob the patriarch.
- 🕒 Matthew quotes Is 7:14, the virgin gives birth to "Emmanuel."
- 🕒 "God is with us." (Mt 1:23; 18:20; 28:20) Israel's exile has ended. God's glory has returned to Israel.

Central to the season of Advent is believing that God's future will rescue us from exile (whether from life's circumstances or self-imposed).



Season of Christmas: celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Messiah

Sunday Gospel readings for Christmas (Year A)

- Jn 1:1-14 Christmas Eve, Morn or Mid-Day
- Mt 2:13-23 1st Sunday after Christmas Day
- Mt 2:1-12 Epiphany Sunday

Christmas: the end of Israel's exile

John 1:1-14

Christmas Eve, Morn or Mid-Day

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and *tabernacled* (“*ἐσκήνωσεν*”) among us, and we saw his glory...”

- John is writing a new Genesis and Exodus (Gn 1-2 – Ex 25-40).
- Israel's exile from the Garden of Eden and exile from the Promised Land is coming to an end in the birth of the Messiah.

The Christmas season celebrates the start of God's promise to deliver us from suffering and death.



Christmas: the end of Israel's exile



Matthew 2:13-23

1st Sunday after Christmas Day

- The flight to Egypt, massacre of the infant boys, return from Egypt
- “Out of Egypt I called my son” (Hosea 11:1), a prophetic promise for Israel’s deliverance.
- “Rachel weeping...” recalls Jeremiah 31:15-17 that ends with a prophecy of hope for the end of exile.
- Matthew presents Jesus as God’s Son and the true representative of Israel.

Even in our darkest moments, God has a plan to deliver us
from the pain and suffering.

Christmas: the end of Israel's exile



Matthew 2:1-12

Epiphany Sunday

- King Herod's reaction ("greatly troubled") at the news of the birth of the Messiah and the words of the prophet Micah 5:1 - "In Bethlehem of Judah...from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people, Israel."
- Matthew draws parallels between Pharoah/Moses and Herod/Jesus – both rulers try to crush the deliverer of Israel.
- The Herod's reaction and the magi's visit fulfill Psalm 72:10-11 and Isaiah 60:6.

The dark forces and rulers of the kingdoms of this world will not defeat
God's kingdom coming into this world.

Ordinary Time I:
Jesus launches the kingdom of heaven on earth

Sunday Gospel readings for OT: I (Year A)

- Mt 3:13-17 Baptism of the Lord
- Jn 1:29-34 John bears witness to Jesus
- Mt 4:12-23 Jesus begins his public ministry
- Mt 5:1-12a The blessings of the beatitudes
- Mt 5:13-16 Image-bearers as Salt and Light
- Mt 5:17-37 Commandments in God's kingdom
- Mt 5:38-48 Radical love in God's kingdom



Ordinary Time I: Jesus launches the kingdom of heaven on earth

Matthew 3:13-17

Baptism of the Lord

- “Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” In Jesus, God’s fidelity to his covenantal promises to Israel is realized.
- “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (Gn 22:2; Ps 2:7; Is 42:1): Abraham’s Isaac; Israel’s king as the earthly representative of Israel; the Lord’s “servant.”

In his baptism, Jesus as God’s Son enters into solidarity with the sins of Israel as the first step in rescuing Israel.





Ordinary Time I: Jesus launches the kingdom of heaven on earth

John 1:29-34

John bears witness to Jesus

“Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”

- John is drawing on Exodus imagery (Ex 12) and the suffering servant imagery from Isaiah (Is 53).
- Two paschal lamb images converge: the Passover exodus from slavery and the suffering servant sacrificed for the forgiveness of sins that led to exile.

Rescue from exile and exodus lie at the heart of God coming to be King.

Ordinary Time I:

Jesus launches the kingdom of heaven on earth

Matthew 4:12-23

Jesus begins his public ministry

- Jesus begins his public ministry by “withdrawing” to Galilee, leaving Nazareth and living in Capernaum (Is 8:22-9:1...in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali).
- Jesus’ first words: “Repent (μετάνοια), for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Same as John the Baptist)
- After the call of the first disciples, “he went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.”

Metanoia, a “change of mind” is required to both see and enter into the kingdom of God on earth.



Ordinary Time I: Jesus launches the kingdom of heaven on earth



Mt 5:1-48

The

beginning of the Sermon on the Mount

- In the sermon on the mount, we see Jesus unveiling the “kingdom agenda” – this is what it looks like when God brings his kingdom to earth:
 - Your righteous surpasses the Pharisees and scribes.
 - You are reconciled with your brother and sister.
 - You love your spouse unconditionally.
 - You live a life of integrity and truth.
 - You do not retaliate against others, and you love your enemies.
 - You are “perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.”
- The blessing from the beatitudes (rooted in the Wisdom literature and Psalms) come not so much *to you* as *through you* – God uses the meek, the mourners, and the justice-people to bring his kingdom to earth.

As disciples, we are called to be image-bearers within God’s kingdom and model to others the radical love of God’s kingdom.

Lent:
“Your kingdom come...on
earth as it is in heaven...”



Matthew 4:1-11 Temptation of Jesus

- Matthew links Jesus' 40 days in the desert to both Moses' 40 days in the desert (Ex 34:28; Dt 9:25-26) and to Israel's 40 years in the desert (Nm 14:34).
- Idolatry and disobedience were Israel's sins.
- But Jesus emerges as the obedient Son who gives honor to God and embodies Israel's true identity.
- Jesus rightly embodied the covenantal faithfulness that Israel was meant to render to God (Dt 8:3; 6:16; 6:13).
- He is fully prepared to announce God's kingdom.

Lent begins with an examination of conscience: how does idolatry and disobedience impact my life and relationships?

Matthew 17:1-9

Jesus

Transfiguration of

Lent:

“Your kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven...”

- Jesus “transfigured” (face shining like the sun and clothes white as light) draws on Daniel 7 and Ezekiel 1 and God’s heavenly throne.
- Heaven and earth are overlapping and interlocking in Jesus (the true human, God’s true image-bearer).
- Peter wanting to make “three tents” for Jesus, Moses and Elijah recalls Israel’s desert Tabernacle (where heaven and earth met in ancient Israel).
- “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” Draws again on Gn 22:2; Ps 2:7; Is 42:1: Abraham’s Isaac; Israel’s king as the earthly representative of Israel; the Lord’s “servant.”

Lent continues with a call to believers to listen to what Jesus is telling us (“in accordance with the Scriptures”)!



Lent:

“Your kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven...”



John 4:5-42

Jesus and the Samaritan woman

- Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well near Sychar draws on allusions from Gn 33 where Jacob purchased the land and built an altar and Jos 24 where Joseph was buried.
- It's Johannine irony that Jesus, Israel's Messiah, reveals himself to the Samaritan ('polluted Jew').
- In response, the woman "testified" (μαρτυρέω | martuerō) to the other Samaritans in Sychar, and they came to believe.

Lent challenges us to help build the kingdom of God through our witness to Jesus in our lives and our work.

John 9:1-41
Jesus heals the man born blind

- Jesus healing a man born blind from birth is the sixth “sign” (σημεῖον | *sēmeion*) of Jesus as “the Word made flesh.”
- “Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him.”
- “I am the light of the world.”
- In and through Jesus, God’s kingdom is fully present and rushing into this encounter – heaven and earth overlapping and interlocking – Jesus coming to rescue Israel.

Lent invites us to examine areas in our life where we are blind to kingdom of God in our midst. .

Lent:
“Your kingdom come...on
earth as it is in heaven...”



Lent:

“Your kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven...”

John 11:1-44

Jesus

raises Lazarus from the dead

- The raising of Lazarus from the dead is the seventh and final “sign” (σημεῖον) of Jesus as “the Word made flesh.”
- “This illness will not end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”
- “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.”
- Jesus foreshadows in Lazarus what awaits all believers: new creation after “resurrection from the dead” (*anastasis ek nekrōn*) literally mean the “standing up of the dead corpses” (Ez 37) herein lies the “glory” of God’s kingdom.

As Lent draws to a close, we remain focused on rescue from exile and exodus toward God’s coming kingdom through the resurrection of the dead.



Matthew 26:14-27:66

The Passion of our Lord

Something happened on Good Friday that changed the world.

Jesus intentionally picked the Feast of **Passover** (Mt 26:17-19) to make his final stand. Passover was all about God's rescue of Israel from slavery and the launching of migration (exodus).

The Last Supper: "this is my blood of the covenant...shed...for the forgiveness of sins" draws upon both Exodus (24:8) and Isaiah (53:12).

Judas' suicide (Mt27:3-10) is highlighted by Matthew to spotlight the price for *idolatry*: idols require sacrifices (at times, human).

In his trial before the Sanhedrin and Pilate (Mt 26:57-68; 27:11-31), Jesus and the kingdom of God were confronting the corrupt kingdom of the Roman Empire (and all corrupt kingdoms).

The cross of Christ (Israel's Messiah, Mt 27:33-56) took on and "exhausted" the brutal kingdoms of this world and the dark forces of evil that enslave us.

Jesus and the cross are the "crossroads of history."

Lent:

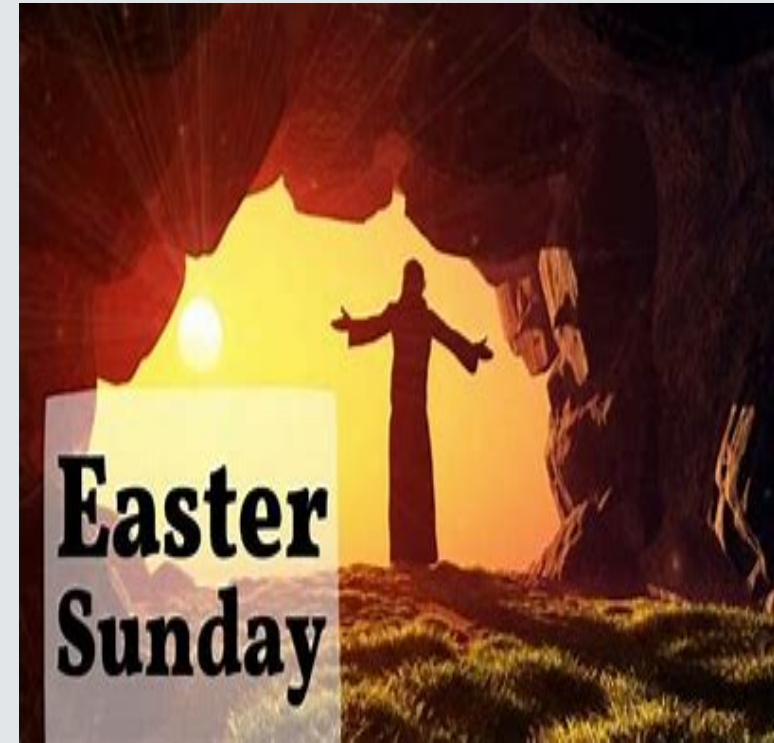
“Your kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven...”



Sunday Gospel readings for Easter: Year A

- Easter Sunday Mt 28:1-10 The Resurrection of Jesus
- Sun of Easter Jn 20:19-31 Appearance to the disciples and Thomas
- 3rd Sun of Easter Lk 24:13-35 Appearance on the Road to Emmaus
- 4th Sun of Easter Jn 10:1-10 Jesus as the good Shepherd
- 5th Sun of Easter Jn 14:1-12 Last Supper discourses
- 6th Sun of Easter Jn 14:15-21 Sending of the Advocate
- 7th Sun of Easter Jn 17:1-11a The prayer of Jesus
- Pentecost Sunday Jn 20:19-23 Appearance to the disciples

Season of Easter:
Commemorating the resurrection
of Jesus from the dead



The Gospel resurrection narratives



The Resurrection narratives are the earliest materials of the Jesus-tradition (pre-Pauline):

1. The Evangelists would not have had (on purpose) women as the first eye-witnesses. (Cf. 1 Cor15:3-9).
2. There are no attempts at OT cross references or allusions – the event is unprecedented biblically.
3. The wide breadth of people who saw Jesus is telling.
4. The Easter narratives reflect a mixture of eye-witness enthusiasm and strange bewilderment as to what had actually happened.
5. Both the empty tomb and the encounter with the living Jesus can be regarded as historically reliable and is the source of the belief in the “resurrection” (ανάσταση) of Jesus.

Easter: God's new creation is launched

Matthew 28:1-10

The resurrection of Jesus

8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“Do not be afraid.”



Easter:
God's new creation is launched



Jn 20:19-31

Appearance to

the disciples and Thomas

8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“Peace be with you.”

Easter:
God's new creation is launched

Lk 24:13-35

Appearance on the road to Emmaus

8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?”



Easter: God's new creation is launched

Jn 10:1-10

Jesus

as the Good Shepherd

8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“I am the gate for the sheep.”



Easter:
God's new creation is launched

Jn 14:1-12
Last Supper discourses

8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

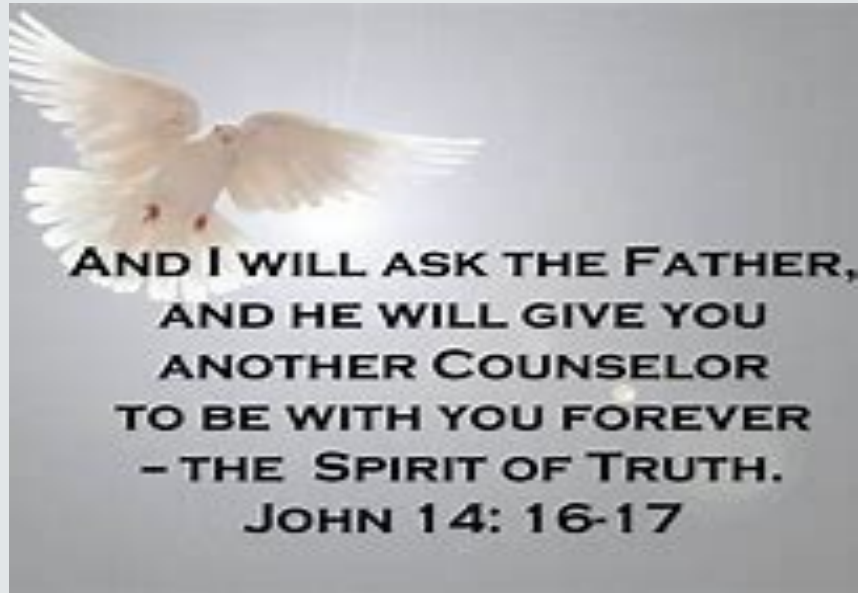


Easter:
God's new creation is launched

Jn 14:15-21

Sending

of the Advocate



8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“I will not leave you as orphans; I
will come to you.”

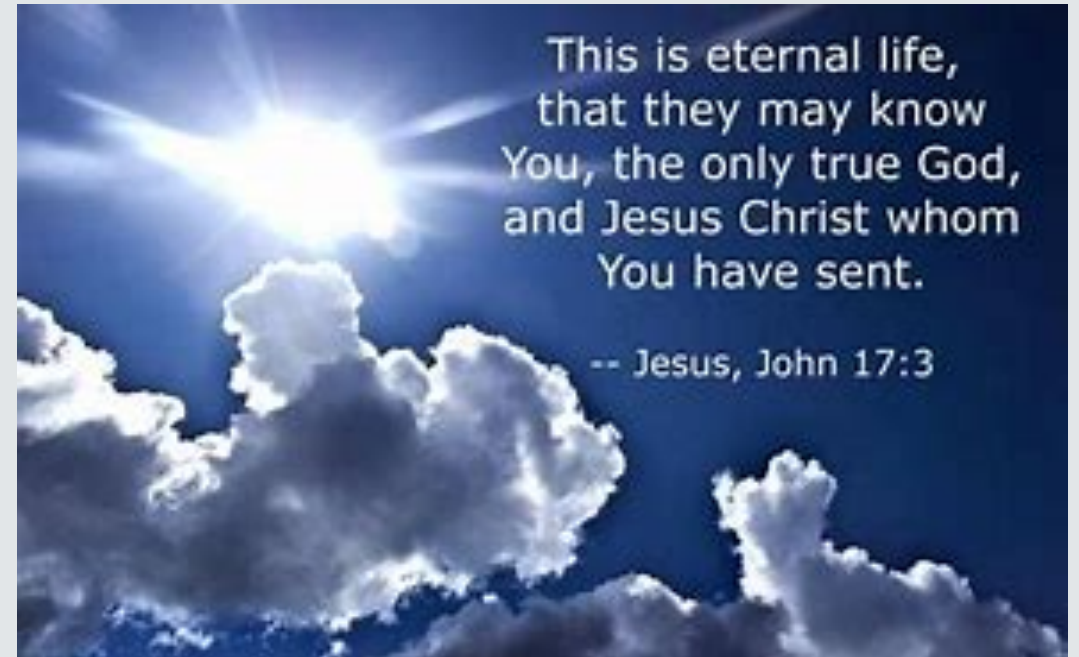
Easter:
God's new creation is launched

Jn 17:1-11a

The prayer of Jesus

8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“I glorified you on earth by
accomplishing the work you gave
me to do.”





Easter:

God's new creation is launched

Jn 20:19-23

Appearance

to the disciples

8 Easter (new creation) meditations:

“Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Sunday Gospel readings for OT: II (Year A)

- Jn 3:16-18 The Most Holy Trinity
- Jn 6:51-58 Body and Blood of Christ

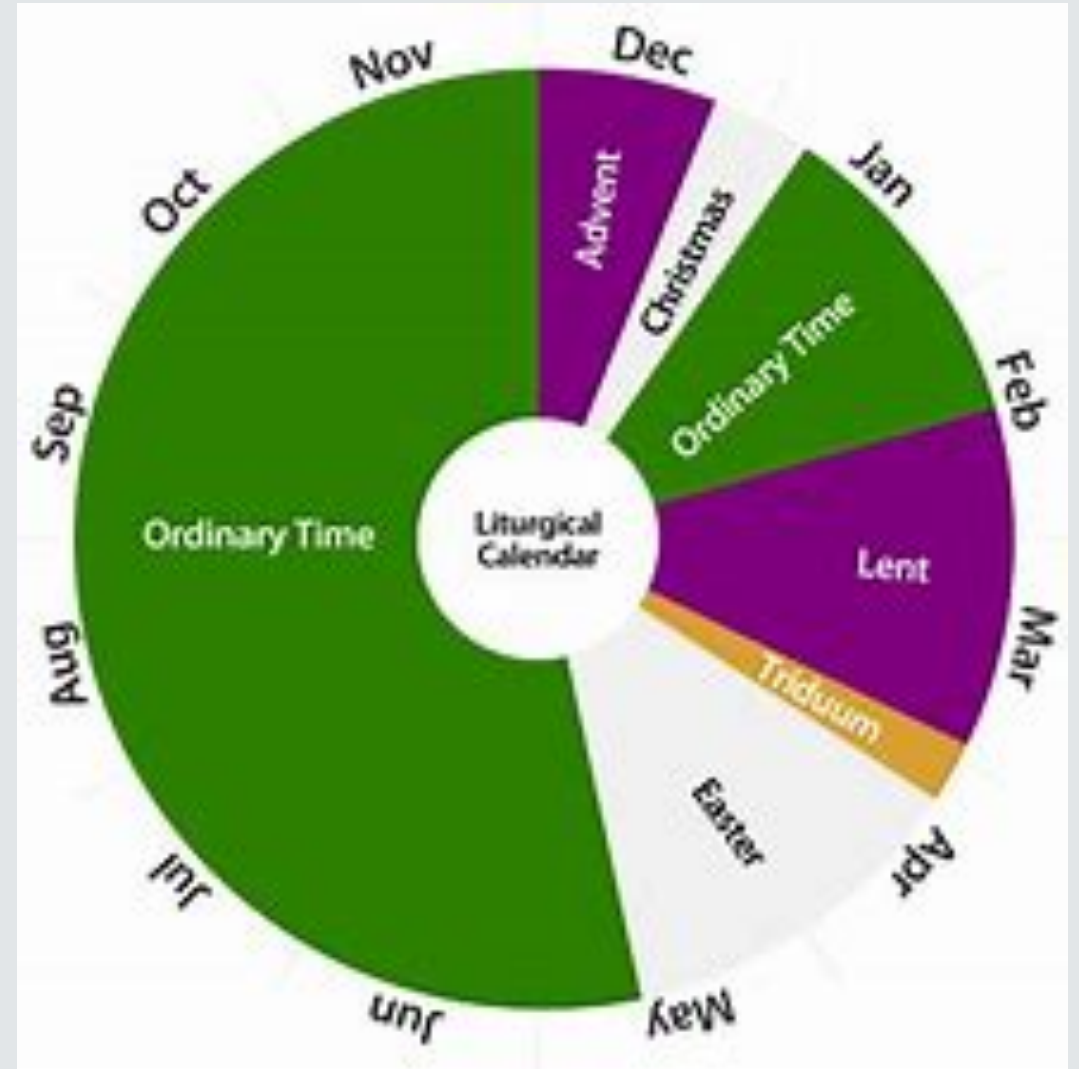
10th Sunday – 34th Sunday in Ordinary Time

June 4 – November 26, 2023

Mt 9:9-13 The call of Matthew

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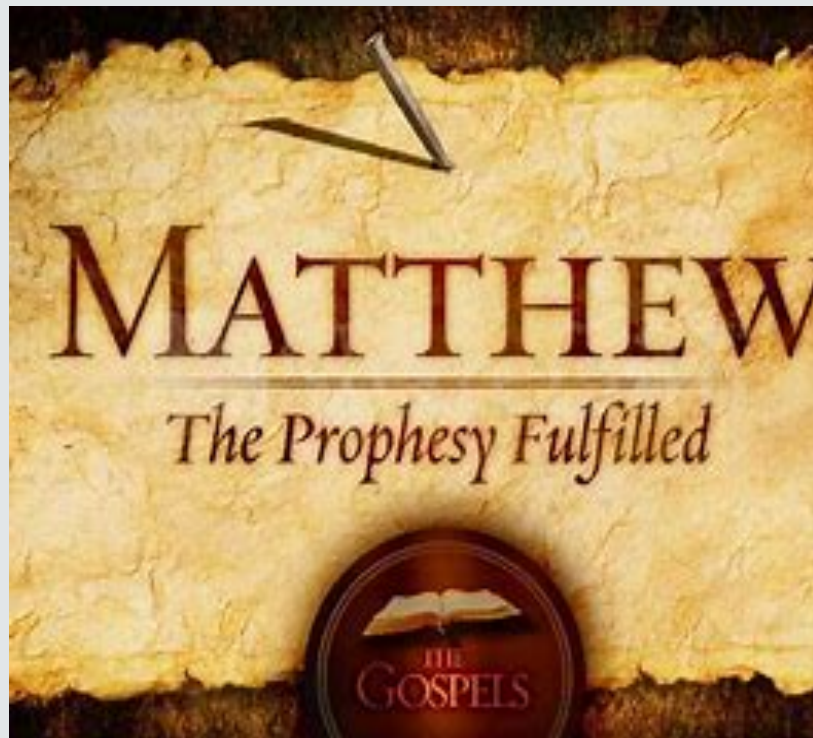
Mt 25:31-44 The judgement of the nations



Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Matthew 9-25 in Ordinary Time II

Grouped Themes in Matthew 9-25



- Mission and Discipleship
- Parables on the kingdom of heaven
- “Powerful deeds” and the suffering Messiah
- Church and Community
- Kingdom parables in Judea and Jerusalem

Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Mission and Discipleship

(June 4 – July 2, 2023)

Mt 9:9-13	Call of Matthew
Mt 9:36-10:8	Mission of the 12
Mt 10:26-33	Courage under persecution
Mt 10:37-42	Condition of discipleship
Mt 11:25-30	Praise of the Father



Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Mission and Discipleship

(June 4 – July 2, 2023)



Mission (doing one's part to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth) requires:

- ✓ Disciples (call of Matthew)
- ✓ Who understand their mission (imitate Jesus)
- ✓ Who see themselves as image-bearers (authentically human)
- ✓ Who realize part of the price is persecution (facing dark forces – human and demonic)

Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Parables on the kingdom of heaven

(July 2 – July 16, 2023)

- Mt 13:1-23 Parable of the Sower explained
- Mt 13:24-43 Parables of the weeds among the
wheat, the mustard seed, the yeast
- Mt 13:44-52 One-liner parables



Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Parables on the kingdom of heaven

(July 2 – July 16, 2023)



Over these three Sundays, 7 parables heard and explained:

1. How people process the kingdom of heaven (sower) – Is 6: call of Isaiah.
2. Son of Man vs. the devil (wheat and weeds), people in the battlefields of the two kingdoms – Ps 78 (“speaking in parables”): Israel’s past fails to appreciate God’s acts.
3. “The kingdom of heaven is like...buried treasure, fine pearls, nets filled with fish” (immeasurable worth).
 - “Harvest time” | “the end of the age” – the transition into God’s new future
 - Mt 13:52 – Matthew’s cameo appearance

Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

“Powerful deeds” and the suffering Messiah

(July 23 – August 20, 2023)

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Mt 14:13-21 | Return of the 12 and Feeding 5,000 |
| Mt 14:22-33 | Walking on water |
| Mt 15:21-28 | The Canaanite woman’s faith |
| Mt 16:13-20 | Peter’s confession about Jesus |
| Mt 16:21-27 | 1 st Passion Prediction and Conditions
of discipleship |



Ordinary Time II:

Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

“Powerful deeds” and the suffering Messiah

(July 23 – August 20, 2023)



- The Synoptic Gospel use the Greek word δύναμις (“powerful deeds”) for Jesus’ miracles. (John uses σημεῖον (“sign”) for Jesus’ miracles.)
- In Jesus, heaven and earth are overlapping and interlocking.
- Jesus’ “powerful deeds” are not so much ‘supernatural’ as they are signposts to God’s new future – what the kingdom of heaven on earth will be like: no more hunger, demons, fear.
- Peter: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Peter as “upon this rock...my Church” – bound and loosed in heaven and on earth – in the Church, heaven and earth are overlapping and interlocking.
- 1st passion prediction: Jesus reveals himself as the suffering Messiah – revealing the “glory” and depth of God’s self-giving love.

Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Church and Community

(August 27 – September 3, 2023)

Mt 18:15-20

A brother who sins

Mt 18:21-35

Parable of the unforgiving servant



Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Church and Community

(August 27 –

September 3, 2023)



- A brother who sins...3 stage process – bound and loosed on heaven and on earth: emphasis on heaven and earth overlapping and interlocking.
- “For where two or three are gathering my name, there I am in the midst of them” (18:20; 1:23; 28:20).
- Parable of the unforgiving servant: directed at Peter and the disciples – 7 x 77 (Gn 4:24): forgiveness is to be given without limit.
- Compassion and mercy as guiding principles as we await the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Kingdom parables in Judea and Jerusalem

(September 10 – November 26, 2023)

Mt 20:1-16a	Parable of the workers in the vineyard
Mt 21:28-32	Parable of the two sons
Mt 21:33-34	Parable of the tenants
Mt 22:1-14	Parable of the wedding feast
Mt 22:15-21	Paying taxes to the Emperor
Mt 22:34-40	The greatest Commandment
Mt 23:1-12	Denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees
Mt 25:1-13	Parable of the 10 virgins
Mt 25:14-30	Parable of the talents
Mt 25:31-46	Judgement of the nations



Ordinary Time II: Jesus establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth

Kingdom parables in Judea and Jerusalem

(September 10 – November 26, 2023)



Guidelines for interpreting Jesus' parables:

- Pay attention to whom the parable is directed.
- The kingdom parables in Judea and Jerusalem are pointed and often harsh – they are largely parables of eschatological (God's new future) warning.
- In the judgment of the nations, Jesus is drawing from Dt 33, Ez 18 and 34, Is 58, and Dn 12 – final judgment will be based on the deeds of mercy that have been done for the least of Jesus' brothers and sisters.



5 takeaways for a fresh preaching of Year A

1. Re-Judaize the New Testament – help parishioners see Jesus as the climax of Israel’s story and the crossroads of human history.
2. Take seriously our belief that Jesus died for our sins, was buried and raised on the third day “*in accordance with Scripture.*” (1 Cor 15:3-4)
3. Emphasize our Christian anthropology as God’s “image-bearers” with all the dignity and duty that entails.
4. Pray with intention “Your kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven.” By our baptism we are called to help build the kingdom of God in the here and now in anticipation of God’s new future at the end of this age.
5. Keep the narrative arch of Gn 1-2 through Rev 21-22: this is the key to God’s righteousness and new creation that await us all – life after life after the death “the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”



Tips for Preaching to the Year A Sunday readings

Clergy Formation Session
Dr. Dan Scholz (djscholz@stitch.edu)
Tuesday, October 11, 2022