



Seasons of the Liturgical Year

What's the Season of Your Soul?

Luke 21:29-33
Revelation 20:1-4,11 to 21:2

The Liturgical Year is a series of spiritual seasons.

The Season of Advent in December launches us into a new spiritual year by preparing us for a rebirth of Christ in our lives.



The Christmas Season, which starts on Christmas Eve and ends on Epiphany, will remind us that Jesus became one of us to show us the way to heaven.

Then a new season of "Ordinary Time" begins. It's not "ordinary" at all; it's *ordained* to be a season of learning, with Jesus as our teacher.



Lent soon interrupts this for a season for examining how well we're living what Jesus teaches. This brings us to Holy Week, when we give to Jesus all the ways that

we have rejected his teachings.

On Easter Sunday, we enter into a season of celebrating our victory over sin as we continue our journey of holiness. This season ends with Pentecost, when we recommit ourselves to the indwelling of Christ's Holy Spirit, who empowers us to learn more and live better the ways of holiness.



Now the lessons of Ordinary Time resume until the end of the Liturgical Year.

In Luke 21:29-33, Jesus gives us the fig tree as a visual aid for understanding the seasons of our

faith. Fig trees produce fruit both in the spring and in autumn. Since the disciples, like other Jews, believed that the Messiah would usher in the reign of God at Passover time, Jesus used the fig tree to make a very specific point:

His sacrificial death on the day after Passover would be the first harvest of the kingdom of God. Its fruit is our freedom from the deadly consequences of sin.

The second harvest is the autumn fruit. We see a wonderful image of this in Revelation 20:1-4,11 to 21:2. Its fruit is heaven. We have been resurrected into eternal life by accepting Jesus' sacrificial death for our sins.

In contrast, those who reject the sacrifice of Jesus and continue in their deadly sins to the very end have no eternal life in them. There is nothing to harvest.

When we're unhappy about someone else's spiritual growth, we should remember that we're all in different seasons of our souls.

What season are you in? Is it the winter of dying to self because your sins have left you cold and almost lifeless? Is your faith a seed waiting to sprout in early springtime? Are you a sapling Christian who's just beginning to gain strength?

Or is your relationship with Christ providing summer shade under which others find shelter? Are your branches reaching out to others? Have you begun to bear fruit by serving in ministry?

Remember the necessity of each season. Even the most dead-looking times have divine purposes.