

Bulletin Article #7 = THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Now that we've finished reflecting on the *Introductory Rites* of the Mass, we begin the part of the Mass called the *Liturgy of the Word*. Every Sunday Mass, we read from the Bible, God's Word in the Scriptures, and there is always a First Reading, a Psalm, a Second Reading, and a Gospel Reading. These three readings (and the Psalm) are meant to give us the chance to hear God's Word spoken into our hearts, especially because we believe that the Bible is truly God speaking to us as if He were alive today and speaking to each of us in a personal way (see Hebrews 4:12 – "The Word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart."). The Church picks these Scripture readings on a 3-year cycle (we are currently in Year A right now in 2023, but we are coming up on Advent which is when a new church year begins and we switch over to Year B). The Catholic Church also picks readings that almost always have a common theme in the readings. May we open our hearts to hear His word speaking into our lives! This tradition in the Mass to reflect on God's word alive, goes back to the early church, and just for one example here is a beautiful testimony from a great Saint in the 2nd century describing the Mass:

St. Justin Martyr around 155 A.D. – "And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things."