

LIVING FAITH

A RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 11TH, 2016



ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S



THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY—Messengers from John the Baptist

Matthew 11:2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

"... the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them."



REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

How do we know that Christ is in our midst? Jesus tells the disciples of John the Baptist today that the signs are-- the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. Have you ever helped the blind to see? Of course you have! If, out of kindness, you've ever helped somebody understand something in a new way, then you have helped the blind see. Have you ever helped the lame to walk? If, in compassion, you've ever helped a senior citizen who is having trouble walking to reach a destination, then you have helped the lame to walk. Have you ever cleansed a leper? That's a hard one! But if you have ever welcomed someone who might not be made welcome by others, and made them feel like they belong in your company, then you have done what Jesus once did for lepers, restoring them to community. We are the hands and feet of Jesus Christ today. When we see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and love others with a selfless love, then the work of Jesus is being done in our midst. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

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SIGNS THAT JESUS IS AT WORK IN OUR MIDST



IN YOUR EXPERIENCE...

Where and how have you known the blind to regain their sight?
Have you ever experienced someone gaining an insight that they did not have before, or seeing something in a new way, perhaps with your help or the help of another person?

Where and how have you seen a leper being cleansed and restored to the community? Have you ever experienced somebody who has been in trouble being offered a fresh start?

Where and how have you experienced deaf people suddenly hearing?
Have you ever had the experience of listening to someone say something over and over again, and then, all of a sudden, you realize how important it really is?

Where and how have you witnessed the dead being raised to life?
Have you ever had a door closed in your face, a hope dashed, and then some new or maybe even better possibility is offered?

JESUS IS THE GOOD NEWS. THE GOOD NEWS IS PROCLAIMED WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE SEE OR EAR, OFFER HOPE AND POSSIBILITY, AND ACT WITH COMPASSION AND JUSTICE.

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THE CHURCH TEACHES

Liturgical Year A: The Gospel according to Matthew

The new Liturgical Year begins in Advent; this year is Year A and the focus throughout the year is on Matthew's Gospel. As we listen to this Gospel proclaimed throughout our liturgies this year, let's reflect a little on some of the key understandings about Matthew's Gospel.

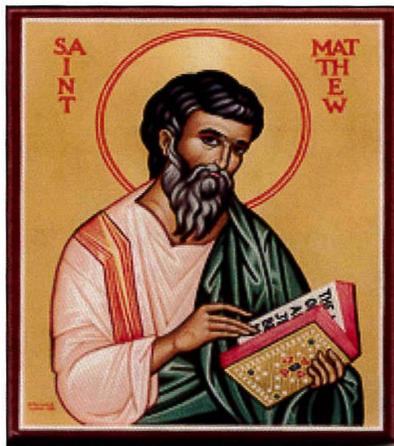
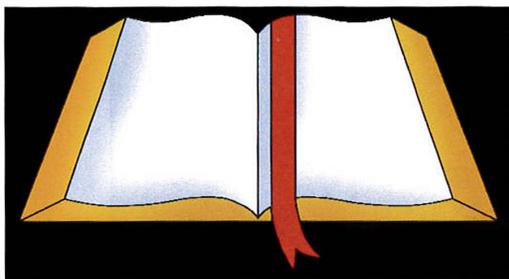
There is no clear agreement on the author or date when this Gospel was compiled. Tradition has it that the author was Matthew (Levi) a disciple of Jesus. However, this Gospel seems to have used almost all of Mark's Gospel and has much in common with the Gospel of Luke.

The majority of scholars date this Gospel between 80 and 100 AD. Matthew's Gospel is thorough; it contains much of Mark and Luke and is well organized that it became one of the most widely used and popular used Gospel in the life of the early Church.

When listening to the Gospel of Matthew, consider that Matthew, like each of the Gospel writers, gathered all the stories and traditions about Jesus into a coherent understandable story for the early Christian communities. Each Gospel was responding to the needs of a particular Christian community and audience in a particular location and a particular time.

Matthew's Gospel is well organized and well written. There is clear indication that the writer particularly addresses the Jewish community to show that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah according to Jewish tradition. Jesus' life is shown as the fulfillment of the promises God made to the Jewish people throughout their history. Jesus is often shown to be a true teacher of the Jewish Law. The Gospel describes Jesus' teaching in a simple effective way. This would indeed be very helpful for those becoming early Christians.

*Particularly, Matthew connects the continuity between Judaism and Christianity. We will explore more of this during this liturgical year.**



*A good resource for more on the Gospels: Zanzig, Thomas(1982): **Jesus is Lord, A Basic Christology for Adults.** Winona: St. Mary's Press.

WALKING TOWARD CHRISTMAS

BUILD YOUR CHRISTMAS CRIB PIECE BY PIECE, AND SO PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS

advent week three

THE ANIMALS KNOW THINGS THAT PEOPLE MAY NOT.
THEY'RE WAITING FOR JESUS, AND WARMING THE SPOT.



In the stable that you placed in your home two weeks ago, place a few animals (sheep, cows, donkeys, or whatever you have available). The animals will keep the stable warm for the Child.

*in the stable scene below,
list some ways that your love helps warm the lives of others.
write some ways that others have warmed your life?*

