

Thoughts on the Daily Word

34th Week of the Year. Saturday 30th November. *Readings: Apoc. 22:1-7; Psalm: 94; Gospel: Luke 21:34-36.*

Today feels like the hinge of the liturgical year. We take for granted the structures of the year. Even the year itself is a human construct to give meaning to our lives. The seasons and meteorological change provide the background but just how we interpret these events is something that we do in our civilisations. They can simply be a retreat or a new beginning. We take for granted in the West the Christian construct of time though even we are divided between the Gregorian and the Julian Calendars plus the new designation of years as Before the Christian Era (BCE) and Christian Era (CE). The liturgical year that begins with Advent is meant to provide a rhythm of worship and community growth, the two very much linked, that moves us forward. The Apocalypse provides an ending but also a new beginning and it builds on Ezekiel and the story of the new Jerusalem after the Babylonian Exile with its moving stream. Perhaps it is also meant to give hope after the similar destruction and exile in AD 70. Ezekiel and John want to give a vision of hope for their people. A vision of God and a restored community. The end of the year's lectionary moves smoothly into a new cycle hinged on hope, the heart of Advent. It is not just going back to the beginning again but bringing back to our mind the root of that hope to empower us to move forward.