



LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

The Liturgical Year

Theodore Stylianopoulos

orthodoxchristian.info/pages/Lit_year.htm

THE LITURGICAL YEAR IS A WAY OF discipline in prayer, a pattern of worship, an anchor of support for the life of the Church. But it also has deeper significance. The late George Florovsky, an eminent Orthodox theologian of blessed memory, has taught us that worship is a response to the call of God who has already made known His redeeming love to us through decisive events culminating in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. Worship has two major aspects: remembrance (*anamnesis* which means not only historical remembrance but also re-living the events commemorated) and thanksgiving (including praise and doxology).

Thus the liturgical year, by bringing unceasingly before us God's mighty deeds of salvation and the reality of God's kingdom in our midst, is the sanctification of time and thereby the true fulfillment of both personal and corporate aspects of our

lives as Christians. Far from being simply a calendar, the liturgical year in the life of the Church — the life of Christians living in community as brothers and sisters — in awareness of God's kingdom, remembering the entire communion of Prophets, Apostles, Saints and all of God's people on earth and in heaven, being renewed by God's saving love, helping one another, witnessing to Christ's good news, and waiting for the fullness of the coming kingdom according to God's timing. "If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord" (Rom. 14:8)

Orthodox worship proclaims the centrality of Christ. The liturgical year celebrates the presence of the mystery of Christ in the life of the Church and seeks to make the living Christ a renewing life-source for every Orthodox Christian.

Do not the most important feastdays of the year celebrate the good news of the life and work of Christ, the Annunciation, His Birth, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism, Transfiguration, Triumphal Entry, Passion Week, Easter, Ascension and His gift of the Spirit on Pentecost day,



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