



## INTRODUCTION

On September 30, 2019, on the liturgical memorial of St. Jerome, Pope Francis announced that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time would be celebrated as the Sunday of the Word of God. The inspiring full text of his Apostolic Letter, *“Aperuit illis: Instituting the Sunday of the Word of God”* is contained herein. This year it will fall on Sunday, January 24, 2021.

In the *Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass*, we are reminded of the role of the Word of God in the life of the Church:

In the hearing of God's word the Church is built up and grows, and in the signs of the liturgical celebration God's wonderful, past works in the history of salvation are presented anew as mysterious realities. God in turn makes use of the congregation of the faithful that celebrates the Liturgy in order that his word may speed on and be glorified and that his name be exalted among the nations.

Whenever, therefore, the Church, gathered by the Holy Spirit for liturgical celebration, announces and proclaims the word of God, she is aware of being a new people in whom the covenant made in the past is perfected and fulfilled. Baptism and confirmation in the Spirit have made all Christ's faithful into messengers of God's word because of the grace of hearing they have received. They must therefore be the bearers of the same word in the Church and in the world, at least by the witness of their lives.

The word of God proclaimed in the celebration of God's mysteries does not only address present conditions but looks back to past events and forward to what is yet to come. Thus God's word shows us what we should hope for with such a longing that in this changing world our hearts will be set on the place where our true joys lie (Preamble, 7).

We are fully aware that in the Dioceses of the United States, many parishes will also focus on the beginning of Catholic Schools Week. This commemoration certainly can be congruous with the Sunday of the Word of God, since all catechesis must “echo down the Word.”

The attached pages provide a wide variety of resources to help you, your diocese, and your parishes to celebrate this day more fully.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God” (Colossians 3:16) ■ RT