

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR YEAR B – MARK'S GOSPEL

Each week the Parish Bulletin gives the references for the Sunday readings. This year is *Year B* of the three-year cycle of Sunday readings. On the Ordinary Sundays we will read from Mark's Gospel. We will follow what is called a semi-continuous reading, that is, one Sunday usually begins where the previous Sunday's Gospel concluded.

Mark's Gospel

Most scholars accept that Mark's Gospel was the first of the four Gospels to be written and it is dated between the years 65 and 75. It is also accepted that Mark was not an eye-witness to the ministry of Jesus. He represents the second generation of disciples who had received various oral and written accounts about Jesus from those who were eye-witnesses.

All the New Testament books were written in Greek. From his writing style we believe that Mark was a native Greek-speaker and was probably a member of the early Christian community in Rome.

His Gospel was written for a community that had undergone persecution and in many ways was struggling to hold on to the message of Jesus.

The Lectionary

The Lectionary is the book containing the Scripture readings selected to be read at Mass. On Ordinary Sundays the first reading is taken from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and is chosen to reflect on the Gospel reading of that particular Sunday. The Responsorial Psalm has been chosen to respond to the message of the first reading.

The second reading is not connected with the first reading or the Gospel. It is an opportunity for us to read from the other books of the New Testament, particularly the Letters of St Paul. For the next five Sundays (until Lent begins) we will read from the **First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**. St Paul was writing from Ephesus in late 56 or very early in 57. Therefore his letter to the Corinthians was written about ten years before Mark wrote his Gospel.

Paul Crowley, Parish Priest