

Epiphany Devotion

Eric Jensen

New Liturgy

Santo, Santo, Santo (Latin American trad.) – Sung by Tiqui – Cordoba, Argentina



Our lives here on this planet are routinely shifted by the forces and powers that guide our world. In these periods of change, “God’s will” can feel distant, or even foreign to our eyes, ears, and hearts, but to be Lutheran is to lean into that uncertainty, the grey of our journeys on Earth: the “what does this mean?” that was so often uttered by Luther himself, and which many of us grew up reading over and over in the catechism.

It’s so very easy for me to type all of this of course, to put the words down on a page for you to read; it’s something else entirely to read them in the moment and believe it to be true. Yet, week in, week out that was the challenge that the ELCA’s Young Adults in Global Mission program put before us. In many ways it was no different than the trials and challenges we face now, back home in the United States. YAGM simply places them more directly in your line of sight, on the tip of your tongue, in the palms of your hands. As I battled culture shock, and the emotional strain that starting life in a new country brings, weekly worship was a centering time for me. In my Argentine Lutheran

congregation, I was often working with young folks each week during the service there, so for me, weekly worship was Holy Mass at Santa Maria de los Angeles in Boulogne every Sunday evening, on the cusp of week's ending, and new week's beginning.

As the intense Argentine sun faded below the horizon, we settled into the chapel, and joined together in the liturgy of this group of people who had adopted me into their family. The piece above is the Holy, Holy, Holy from our mass each Sunday, a song which struck me increasingly as the year went on, both because it's words were some of the first Castellano I was able to piece together, and because it came just before the communion meal, something which crossed the boundaries of nation, culture, and language.

The arrival of Christ in our midst, or perhaps rather the bubbling of Christ to the surface of our world when He may feel distant and deep: that's communion to me. That's Epiphany, sacrament, faith. God's presence bursts into our midst, and though it may feel foreign to us, or come to us by an unexpected road, God continually pursues us, always finds us, and ever walks alongside us on this pilgrim journey.

Changing God,

You move among us in a multitude of ways; you bless this world with diversity in language, culture, plants and animals, and landscape. Let us find your presence and lean into the discomfort of experiencing new pieces of you. Lord, guide us in our walk, and accompany us in that journey with one another. Amen.

- Where do you seek God; in what language, liturgy, or tradition?
- God blessed us with a beautiful spectrum of religious customs, both in the Lutheran Church, and outside it; what are your faith comfort-zone's growing edges?
- What makes you uncomfortable?
- Where have you found God's beauty and presence in unexpected places?
- Can pursuit of that discomfort become new spiritual practice in your faith life?

