

## FROM THE PASTOR

My dear brothers and sisters,

This weekend, after months of fasts and feasts (Lent, Easter, Solemnities), we enter back into the Sundays in Ordinary Time. It may seem a bit strange to have this cycle every year. Why do we have an annual liturgical cycle? The basic answer to this is that “if we stop remembering, we forget.” We go through the mysteries of our Faith over and over again so that we may enter more deeply into the remembering of our Lord. At the beginning of the Liturgical year is Advent, when we remember the time of waiting from the Fall (Adam and Eve’s sin) until the Redeemer came. Christmas, of course, celebrates the coming of the Redeemer, as Jesus is born, the Hope of the nations. Lent reminds us of the forty days of fasting that Jesus did in the desert – how we are called to enter into this mystery of a loving, self-sacrificing gift as well – culminating with the Sacred Triduum (“Three Days”) of Holy Thursday (the Institution of the priesthood and the Eucharist, and the washing of the Disciples’ feet), Good Friday (the suffering and death of our Lord, Jesus Christ), and the Easter Vigil (the Resurrection of Christ). We then enter the season of Easter for fifty days, remembering in joy how we are set free from sin and death.

In between Christmas and Lent, and again after Easter, we celebrate Ordinary Time. This doesn’t mean “ho hum, blah, ordinary time,” but rather “ordered time” – time which is in order. There are thirty-four Sundays in Ordinary Time. The first thirty-three are a reminder of the thirty-three years of Jesus’ life on earth. We walk through the various aspects of His public ministry. The thirty-fourth Sunday is the Solemnity of Christ, the King of the Universe. On this Sunday, we recall how Christ reigns in glory for all eternity (33 years on earth, eternity in heaven).

So here we are, back in Ordinary Time, jumping onto the eleventh Sunday. We step into the middle of Jesus’ ministry as He is telling parables of the kingdom of God. One parable is about the mustard seed – the smallest seed – which becomes the largest of plants. It is the smallest of things – done for love, done for the kingdom of God – that grow and flourish. This was Blessed Mother Teresa’s secret. She didn’t set out to change the world. She didn’t try to touch millions of people. Her focus was to see Christ in the person right in front of her. She met each person and loved them with Jesus’ love. This grew into a “large bush,” which is still flourishing and growing even after she has left this earth.

Jesus doesn’t call everyone to do the “big things” – martyrdom, great miracles, radical poverty – but He does call everyone to do everything with love. Yes, everything. Even brushing our teeth or making the bed. If we do everything with love for God, we will see His presence more and more in our lives. When we meet each person with love, recognizing in them God’s image and likeness, this little mustard seed of love – which seems to be nothing, a joke even – will grow, and the kingdom of God will explode with greatness in the world! Imagine that. Imagine if each one of us, who call ourselves followers of Christ, touched each person we meet with the love of Christ. How would this change the world? Even with the little things, God would change them into great things! I know we know this. We’ve heard it preached before many times, but if we stop remembering, we forget.