

## *Ordinary Time 2A 2017*

### *Ordinary Time?*

What a difference a week makes. Last week our church was beautifully decorated with Christmas ornaments; this week they are all gone. The unadorned beauty of our church reminds us we are now in Ordinary Time, that period during which we reflect on the mystery of Christ's life. Although we call this period Ordinary Time, it is, as I have often said, a time of grace—a reminder that God works in extraordinary ways in our ordinary lives. Let me give you three examples.

In today's second reading, St. Paul reminds us we have been sanctified in Christ Jesus—called to be holy. Perhaps you missed those words when they were read a few moments ago, or perhaps you let them pass you by. But stop and think for a moment about what they mean. *We have been sanctified in Christ Jesus.* Christ has already made us holy by his saving death and resurrection. We are, whether we realize it or not, God's saints, God's holy one, not because of anything we have done but because of what God has done for us in Christ. And because we have been sanctified, *we have been called to be holy.* Think of that. Each of us has been called to be a saint. Each of us can become a saint because we have been sanctified in Christ.

In today's first reading, the prophet Isaiah says *I have made you a light to the nations that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.* Today, these

words are meant for us; they are spoken to us. Through Christ, God has made each of us a light to the nations. God has made this parish of St. Mary's a light to the nations. Because we have been sanctified in Christ, we are to be a light to other. We are to be the light of Christ to the world—the light that dispels the darkness of sin, the light that overcomes even the power of death. But are we claiming too much for ourselves? Is this possible? Yes, if we remember that our light is the light of Christ.

Finally, in today's gospel, John the Baptist says *I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God*. But today, these words are our words. These words summarize the purpose of our lives and the mission of our parish. We have seen that Jesus is the Son of God, and so we must testify to what we have seen. We have seen that Jesus is the light of the world, and so we must testify to what we have seen. We have experienced the holiness of Christ, and so we must testify to what we have experienced.

Yes, we have returned to the period the church calls her Ordinary Time. But this is no ordinary time. It is time filled with God's grace. It is a time when we are called to be holy because we have been sanctified in Christ. It is a time when we are called to be the light of Christ to the world. It is a time we are called to witness and testify that Jesus is the Son of God, the salvation of the world. This is why, as

we return to this Ordinary Time, we give thanks for the extraordinary grace of God  
we experience every day.