

I've Been Thinking – About “Ordinary Time”

I've been thinking about Ordinary Time in the liturgical year of the church.

Some branches of the church name Ordinary Time in different ways: Sundays after Pentecost or Trinity and the appropriate number that goes with the particular Sunday. As an example, Sunday, July 8 of this year is the 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time, or the 7th Sunday after Pentecost, or the 6th Sunday after Trinity. If you are visiting different churches this summer, look at the top of the bulletin and notice how the Sunday in the church year is designated.

So, allowing for such flexibility, still I've been thinking about Ordinary Time, which season we are now into, and which will take us into Advent and then the Christmas season. (Maybe the thought of Christmas will at least cool us down in the midst of a hot, muggy summer.)

The season of Ordinary Time in the church year is the longest season of them all and can take approximately six to eight months of the calendar year, and thus one can see the appropriate designation of “Ordinary Time”.

Such is life, isn't it? We have our graduations, birthdays, anniversaries and parties for any number of reasons, but when all is said and done, we go back to our daily routines of ordinary living. Like the church year, the bulk of our lives are lived in ordinary time. Since we spend so much of our lives in the ordinary routine of living, it seems to me that the ordinary part of our lives should not be considered just getting by or existing. Rather, since most of our lives are involved in the ordinary, ordinary time and ordinary things are sacred, a treasured part of our lives. For in the long run, our ultimate happiness and fulfillment come from the ordinary times and things of life.

As I further thought about ordinary time, a second thing that came to me is that God acts through ordinary means in our lives.

Sometimes, both in life and faith, we can be searching and longing for God to come to us in spectacular, extraordinary ways. And we wait, and wait, and God doesn't intervene in our lives via the spectacular, and we become disappointed and disgruntled and wonder just where God is, anyway.

And there God is in the ordinary ... a child running into mom/dad's or grandma/grandpa's arms; a parent teaching a child how to hit or catch a baseball; the meals which are prepared as regular as clockwork by a family member; the strength to go

for a walk and be open to see and listen to God's creation; the splashing into the pool or lake on a hot summer day; clearing our e-mail or text messages – even when things don't go the way we would like; the bank book that doesn't balance; the car returned from the garage with the same old problem still there; that ache or pain that will not go away or which relocates itself to a different part of the body; the item you bought which could have been purchased at half price if you'd just waited a couple of more days.

The good and the not-so-good both make up the ordinary, and that's where God is.

Ordinary time, ordinary things. Both are sacred!

For in the ordinary, is God.

In ordinary time, things and places,

Wayne