

Dear Parishioners,

There is nothing ordinary about Ordinary Time. Despite the fact that we are celebrating the Feast of the Holy Trinity this weekend and the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ next weekend, we are officially in the season known as Ordinary Time. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost have now come and gone. They were spectacular, wonderful seasons of hope, new life, and celebrations of God's grace in very important times of the liturgical year. We now have twenty-six weeks left before Advent begins and we call this long season "Ordinary Time", but there is nothing ordinary about it.

Every celebration of the Sunday Mass has the same dignity throughout the entire year. At each Mass we celebrate the gift of our salvation as we remember the Paschal Mystery, Jesus' ministry, suffering, death and resurrection. We hear in the Eucharistic Prayer, "Do this in memory of me." What we are doing at each and every Mass throughout the entire liturgical year is this: we are entering into the Last Supper, the mystery of Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemene, his trial, his Way of the Cross and his resurrection from the dead. The mystery and the miracle of the Eucharistic Celebration is that the Paschal Mystery includes us today. We are united to the Body and Blood of Christ in exactly the same way as the Twelve were on that night at the Last Supper, as we eat his body and drink his blood. In this communion that we share we receive the gift of eternal salvation. There is nothing "ordinary" about this reality.

I want to encourage people to think really hard about the dignity of our Eucharistic Celebration. I need to as well. There are times when we take it so for granted that we don't even think about what we are doing; we just do it. Quite often we celebrate Mass in such a way that it seems like we're just fulfilling an obligation with an attitude that says, "Let's get it over with."

Even though it is summertime right now I would like to encourage you to consider the following guidelines for how we celebrate the Mass.

- Please go to the bathroom at home before you leave or prior to Mass when you get here. It is extremely distracting when people get up during Mass to go to the bathroom. It is also disrespectful of the dignity of the Mass especially when people are walking in and out of church during the Eucharistic prayers. Going to the bathroom during Mass should be done only in an extreme emergency.

- Please think about what you wear to Mass. Because the Liturgy is so sacred we should try to put on the best clothing we have. Our church is air conditioned and comfortable. Dress clothing is always appropriate for the Eucharistic Celebration.
- Please be willing to respond as well as you can. The Mass calls us to “Full, conscious and active participation.” We do not just sit there like bumps on a log (as my Dad used to say). The Mass is always more meaningful when we make the commitment to worship in a fully active way.
- Try to sit in different places during this season, you will be amazed at how the Mass comes to life when you sit in a different place, near different people; it is even kind of fun.
- Listen attentively to the readings by putting the missalettes in the book holders. Sometimes it is good for us to force ourselves to listen without the aide of the words in front of us. If you don’t like doing this, you can always pick up the missalette again.

In other words, let’s not make this season of Ordinary Time ordinary. We are celebrating a great miracle. Let’s do so in a way that shows that we care about the dignity and the sanctity of what we’re doing.

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel.