

LITURGY BYTES

Winter Ordinary Time



This year there are only five Sundays of Ordinary Time between the feast of the Baptism of the Lord and Ash Wednesday. You might wonder what determines the length of this winter pause. Actually, it is the date for Easter. Thus, that's why we have five weeks in Winter Ordinary Time this year and not six like last year! So, as we look around the Church, we notice that the beauty of the Christmas season is leaving our worship space and, once again, the green coloring is before us. During Ordinary Time, let us pray that God will direct our actions so that we may abound in good works even during these uncertain COVID days of winter.

This weekend we hear in the first Reading from Samuel and in the Psalm response, the ever-popular phrase: "Here I am Lord." We all are probably just as familiar with the hymn, "Here I am, Lord" written by Dan Schutte and sung in most parishes for many years. Even though I have many favorite Church hymns, this one is high on my list because the words inspire me and become part of my prayer. Today's Gospel shows us John the Baptist initiating others to follow Jesus. I often think how we would respond if we were there. Where might we see Jesus staying today? Perhaps, in our own homes, neighborhoods, or places of employment.

Question to ponder: ***What does following Him as a disciple mean for us?***

Have a blessed, safe, and healthy week. ~~~~~ *Michele Hahn*