

FROM THE DESK OF **Fr. Julius**



Brothers and Sisters in Christ; Grace and Peace!

On this Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, the liturgy invites us to look at the quiet simplicity in which Jesus' public ministry begins. As he calls each of the fishermen, it is apparent that their love for Him was immediate and watertight: He alone was able to draw them away from their worldly occupation and invite them to know Him so intimately. It was an ordinary relationship. Everyone is called to be another Christ and to draw closer to Him. The "Ordinary Time of the year" is not ordinary since it is a time to live out our baptismal promises.

Our first reading from Isaiah orients us to the profound and great light that had fallen upon a distressed people, this famous prophetic reference to Christ, fulfilled in today's Gospel. In every area of his ministry, St. Paul channels the character of Jesus Christ in his love for all of them. So in our Second Reading, St. Paul advises the Church in Corinth then and now, that we must live as children of the Light, avoiding divisions and rivalries. In Corinth several factions had surfaced among the Corinthian Christians: yet Paul emphatically alleged that the preaching of the cross with solid catechetical instruction would be the necessary baseline to preserve harmony, not that of human wisdom or eloquence.

Today in our Gospel, Matthew aligns with Paul's exhortation to the Church in Corinth. Thus, to his first apostles, Jesus opens his public ministry with the same message as that of his cousin John. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." To demonstrate how one needn't be a scholar or a genius before embarking on this mission, Jesus begins by assembling "ordinary people" like those fishermen lacking formal education. Perhaps by reasons of their very simplicity, they became effective instruments in the hands of Jesus, to establish His mission.

Ultimately, through the grace of God, each and every baptized person can be guided to appreciate that call by God, to be Christ's disciples, Christ's Light. It is both a privilege and a responsibility. The mission of preaching, teaching and healing which Jesus began in Galilee is also the responsibility of the Church and of each individual Catholic, to *be* the Body of Christ, the Church. Our response to that call enables us to grow in spiritual fullness and be a light in a dark world. Each of us is entrusted, by light of our baptism, towards a certain charism. At the onset of this calendar year, it bears examining how best to be that disciple for others, starting here at home in our faith community. How can you be a disciple in our parish today?

"In our time too, we urgently need to emerge from the darkness of evil, to experience the joy of the children of light!" [Pope Benedict XVI [8.4.2020]

Joyous Sunday!