

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



We are already in Ordinary Time! What is Ordinary for the Christian being the Sanctification of the day. Time is sanctified because Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrated at Christmas, who has entered human history, is in our midst. The prayer of Christ is united with the prayer of the Church.

Samuel, the young boy in the First Reading at Mass today, says 'Speak Lord, your servant is listening'. His prayer is a prophecy of the life of Christ, who came into

the world to teach us how to pray and how to listen to the voice of God, to do his will.

In the general introduction to the Divine Office, the daily prayer of the Church, there is a wonderful explanation of the Prayer of Christ and the Prayer of the Church. I share some of those thoughts here;

'The Son of God, who is one with his Father, who entering the world said: 'Here I am, I am coming, O God, to do your will' (Hebrews 10:9), designed to show us how he prayed: before he calls the apostles, when he blesses God at the multiplication of the loaves, when he is transfigured on the mountain, when he heals the deaf mute, when he raises Lazarus from the dead, before he asks Peter's confession of faith, when he teaches his disciples to pray, when the disciples return from their mission, during the agony in the Garden, and on the Cross.

His daily activity was closely bound up with prayer, and may be said to have flowed from it: he went into the desert or hills to pray, he rose early in the morning to pray, and even spent the night in prayer to God, remaining until the fourth watch.

Prayer was what animated his messianic activity and paschal sacrifice. 'During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him from death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard (Hebrews 5:7) and by virtue of his perfect offering on the altar of the cross, has achieved the eternal perfection of all whom he is sanctifying (Hebrews 10:14) Now raised from the dead, he is living forever to intercede for us all.

The life of Christ perfects and elevates the personal life of each of the faithful, there is no separation between the prayer of Christ and the personal prayer of the individual.

What Jesus himself did, he also commands us to do. He often said 'Pray', 'Ask', 'Seek', 'in my name'. He instructed us on the necessity of prayer, and told us to be humble, watchful, persevering and confident in the goodness of the Father, pure in intention and worthy of God.' May our Ordinary Time be a listening to the voice of the Father. May we learn, like Samuel, to say 'Speak Lord, your servant is listening' and thus experience union with Jesus Christ in our daily prayer life.

Fr. Sean