

## FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



*"The next day, seeing Jesus coming towards him, John said, "Look there is the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world." Jn1:29*

A year ago, Sanna Marin was sworn in as Finland's new 34-year-old Prime Minister, becoming the world's youngest serving state leader. One of the first things she did was propose a four-day work week for her citizens.

"I believe people deserve to spend more time with their families, loved ones, hobbies and other aspects of life, such as culture," she said.

She is not alone in this proposal. Sweden and France are also juggling with the traditional week, attempting to restore some balance to people's lives.

Perhaps this is because the Die Domino - the Day of the Lord, is disappearing.

Sunday is sacred. Church, family, a meal shared together, perhaps sports in the afternoon. Here in Bergen County the Blue Laws are a remnant, a reminder that we once used to spend time with family, we once, as a society, used to spend time with God.

Without God, our days, and our weeks become blurred into a continuum of frenetic activity.

Once God is eclipsed from the equation, we need to reinvent the week.

The Gospel of John, which we listen to at Mass today, corrects this imbalance:

"The next day... John the Baptist saw Jesus coming towards him"

Which day is he referring to?

The Gospel we listen to today happens on "the next day" i.e., the third day in the opening chapter of the Gospel, which is structured in the form of a week. The Gospel of John mirrors the Book of Genesis, which begins by recounting the creation narrative in the form of a week.

On the third day in the creation narrative of Genesis God separates the waters from the dry land. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas.' On this third day God also creates 'vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees on earth, bearing fruit with their seed inside, each corresponding to its own species.' and in the Gospel Jesus is recognized on the third day. The third day also indicates the Resurrection. There is a new creation. Heaven, which was closed after the sin of Adam, is now opened again with the presence of Jesus.

In the measure Jesus is part of our time, our day, our week, we also experience this new creation. We enter into eternity. We enter into the time of God, each day becomes a Die Domino, a day of rest.

Otherwise, our time, our days, our weeks, are spent in restlessly. Not even a four-day week will fix that.

Fr. Sean