

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



As a seminarian I spent four years of my priestly formation in itinerant teams of catechists throughout the US. While in Arizona I once asked Ramon, a father of nine children, what he would like his children to do in life.

His reply: "I would like them to be saints."

I nearly fell over. Was he kidding, or trying to be a Smart Alec? No, he was serious. The way he said it, without pretense or arrogance, just matter-of-factly, made me believe him. Not only did I believe what he said, but I believed that his kids could be saints.

The same can be said of us.

Why should there not one day be a stained-glass window in our church with your image on it? St. Paula of Woodcliff Lake or St. Joe of New Jersey! St. Barbara of Bergen County! Sounds far-fetched? That's perhaps because of two things:

The world we live in does not desire sanctity, but, more importantly, we may not desire it.

When I was in Second Grade in school, I remember seeing an illustrated book of the Lives of the Saints. You never saw a more miserable bunch of people in your life. Who would want to be like them? – none of them were smiling, they all wore drab clothes, and often lived in a cave with little or nothing to eat.

Ramon knew that this image of the saints is false. In fact, the opposite is true; the saints are full of joy, life, and light.

Saints have one thing in common; they know they are sinners, but more importantly, they know that God loves them. They are not perfect, but they have met someone who loves them the way they are. They are not holy because they are good; they are holy because God is good.

Our vocation, our calling, the real meaning of our life, and the only thing that will make us truly happy, is to allow God to make us Saints. Sanctity is not the privilege of a select few, it is offered to all the Baptized.

Sanctity allows us to experience hope where there is despair, courage where there is fear, patience when there is turmoil, the presence of the love of God in our joys and in our sorrows. This can be found in heroic deeds, but more often it is found amidst the mundane and ordinary things of our daily lives. Everything else passes, the love of God endures.

Today we celebrate All Saints Day, a celebration of what we are called to be, to do.

Monday, November 2nd we celebrate the Commemorate all the Faithful Departed, All Souls Day, when we remember and pray for all those who have gone before us 'marked with the sign of faith'. There will be a special All Souls Mass to which are invited the families of all who lost loved ones this past year.

Fr. Sean