

Covenant Life

- Our next in-person Community Gathering will be **next** Sunday, August 8th at 4pm in the MSMCS gym now that we are having prayer meetings on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month.
- If you were not able to attend our last Gathering, you can listen to the audio [here](#), review the Word Gift summary [here](#), and read the transcript [here](#).
- Your ongoing financial support is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222.

Reflection - For some reason I was struck by the term *ordinary* when I saw in the Catholic calendar that it was the *Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*. I found myself asking what is ordinary? What should our ordinary life look like?

The answer came as I read the readings today. Starting off with the first reading ([Ex 16:2-4, 12-15](#)) and hearing about the grumblings of the Israelites...that sure sounds ordinary. Parents continuously experience grumbling. If we are honest with ourselves, we will see that we too, grumble. It is natural to focus on our temporal needs, to want more, to not hunger, to not thirst, to be satisfied. But for God, life is a test. Will our focus be on our temporal needs or upon Him?

Paul, in the second reading ([Eph 4:17, 20-24](#)) was making the same point. In his letter he asks whether we can "put away the old self" and "be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth." Paul is challenging us to do the same thing that God was asking of the Israelites. Can we change our focus from our ordinary, old way of focusing on ourselves, our temporal needs and be renewed and remade by His Spirit? This *renewal*, that we have all experienced, changes our ordinary selves into extraordinary beings capable of seeing beyond the temporal through our faith and confidence in Him!

Jesus makes the same point in the Gospel today ([Jn 6:24-35](#)) challenging the crowd, that was seeking Him to meet their temporal needs, that they should not work for

what perishes but instead focus on Him, the bread of life. But what does this look like in everyday life?

In Community I have met extraordinary people. You. Those who have consciously walked away from the accumulation of goods, from seeking jobs of power, from making life about how much money they could bank. Those who have decided their focus would be on God and that they would live the words of the readings today and not grumble as life throws us curve balls and see life as a test. A test to put away our old selves and accept the renewal that comes in the Holy Spirit to live lives of righteousness and holiness and truth. When we are not working on power, prestige, or possessions, then, when the tragedies of life hit us, we see them as a test, a test of our surrender and we can exclaim, as I have heard many times, Praise the Lord! What enables someone who is facing the loss of a home, loss of their health, loss of a loved one...to respond with the words **Praise the Lord!** It is exactly those who have taken the words of the readings today to heart and focus on Jesus as our bread of life and see every day as an opportunity to live for Him and see every day as bringing us one step closer to our ultimate home with Him!

These, you, are the quiet inspirational heroes who pass the test and turn away from the temptations of the world and are living witnesses of what it means to not live ordinary but *extraordinary* lives that witness to me and the world. Thank you for your Yes.

Let us pray *"Heavenly Father, I repent of the times I have turned from You, lacked faith, and grumbled with a focus on my temporal needs. Today I pledge myself to You, to walk in Your ways, to put my full faith and confidence in You. I commit to living a life of righteousness and holiness of truth. I recommit to hungering and thirsting only for You and the life that You call me to. Amen."*

God bless,
David