

Homily of Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A, 2026

Isaiah 49:3, 5-6; Psalm 40:4, 7-10; 1 Corinthians 1:1-3; John 1:29-34

We have resumed Ordinary Time after Christmas festivities. Ordinary Time refers to those periods that fall outside the major liturgical seasons: Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The present segment of Ordinary Time continues until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday.

Liturgically, Ordinary Time does not imply “uneventful time” or “a time without special or distinctive features.” Liturgically, the word ‘ordinary’ originates from the word ‘ordinal’ which means “of a specified order or in a series.” The Catholic Church numbers in a serial order the weeks after festive seasons, from Week 1 to Week 34. Therefore, Ordinary Time liturgical season is the periods that the weeks are ‘ordinally numbered’ outside the major liturgical seasons. Ordinary Time liturgical season is like a sea which appears calm on the surface but with very active current underneath. Ordinary Time liturgical seasons are very active times of discipleship. This segment of Ordinary Time is the time to put into action the graces we received from Advent season to the Baptism of the Lord, to grow, to bloom, to flower, and to bear fruits.

The Church uses green vestments and green decorations during Ordinary Time. Green is the color that symbolizes life, renewal, energy, growth, health, fertility, and safety. A green light is permission to proceed. Can you imagine the confusion, or even the tragic situation that could result if a green traffic light is disobeyed? The meanings of green color are the Church’s prayers for each one of us.

The first reading is Isaiah’s prophecy about Jesus, through whom Israel received salvation. Jesus’ mission would go beyond Israel as Isaiah prophesied, “It is too little ... for you to be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the survivors of Israel; I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6). Jesus brought salvation not only to Israel but to the whole world.

John the Baptist confirms Isaiah’s prophecy about Jesus in today’s gospel, “John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Behold, the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.’” (John 1:29). Priests repeat these words in every Eucharistic celebration just before Holy Communion. Priests repeat these words to constantly remind us who Jesus is and why we must not delay to follow him and to be his disciples.

On his arrival, Jesus acknowledges Isaiah’s and John the Baptist’s prophecies about himself as “the light of the nations” “who takes away the sins of the world.” He says, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). He further addresses us in Matthew 5:14, “You are the light of the

world – like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.” We are to be lights in the darkness of our world. As bearers of Christ’s light, we are to keep our lights on, and do what we can so that the world of darkness does not consume or blow out our light. May God be our shield and protection in times of life’s winds and hurricanes. Amen.

As Jesus instructs us in Matthew 5:15, let no one hide his or her light under a bushel. No matter how little your light is, let it shine! Therefore, let us light up one another and share our light with one another. There is a saying, “A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.”

The psalmist challenges us by stating, “I announced your justice in the vast assembly; I did not restrain my lips” (Psalm 40:9). Injustice in our environment and our world will continue, and oppression of the innocent will continue where those who are called to announce God’s justice restrain their lips and become silent in the face of injustice, or switch off their light in the face of darkness. Silence in the face of injustice empowers evil. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, “Silence in the face of evil is itself evil.”

In the second reading, St. Paul reminds us that we who have been sanctified by the Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus by our Baptism are called to be holy and are also called to be disciples of Christ Jesus. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to be witnesses of light, truth, and justice. Ordinary Time is indeed a time active witnessing. May God give us the graces we need. Amen.

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