

**For The Bulletin Of
November 13, 2016**

**THE 33RD SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME**

From Father Robert

Before time existed, there was no beginning. “The earth was without form or shape, with darkness over the abyss.” (Genesis 1:2) There was nothing. Except, God. God was all. Then there was a beginning. There was creation. And it was “very good!” From the beginning of creation God desired an intimate, loving relationship with humanity and all of creation. God would walk “in the garden at the breezy time of the day.” Yet, humankind chose and continues to choose to be unfaithful, thwarting the beauty and dignity of what God intended for creation. “Nation will rise against nation,” evil people will “seize and persecute” the faithful; some will be put “to death” and “hated.” We choose infidelity, chaos, violence, evil, hatred. Because of our sinful choices, all creation has been marred. All creation has become something less than God intended at the beginning of creation.

At the end of time, all creation as we know it will cease to be. But instead of returning to a dark void, those who are faithful will rise to eternal Light and will secure their eternal Life. What happens at the end of time will be a reversal of what took place at the beginning of time. Then, all things were created. At the end of time, all things cease to be. Except, God. And those who are faithful who will be united with God.

We might ask, then, what will be so different at the end times? In one sense every day is already the beginning of the end time. Every choice we make has to do with how we will be at the end of time. The signs we observe of human calamities bid us to testify to all that Jesus taught us – that there is more to life than we can see. We must live faithfully now. By our perseverance as faithful followers testifying to Jesus’ name we secure everlasting Life. Every day is an opportunity to live discipleship fully and confidently. Every day is an opportunity to grow in relationship with Jesus, the One Who promises Life to His faithful ones.

In the beginning, all things came to be. At the end, things as we know them will cease to be. Does anything really last forever? Certainly not temples, not nations, not even the foundations of the earth. So, what does last forever? God, the wisdom of Jesus, divine Life. And, yes, the lives of those who persevere in fidelity to the name and mission of Jesus and who “will secure” a share in divine Life. At the end...a new beginning.

Living The Paschal Mystery

The signs of the end of time alert us to the fact that our striving to be faithful disciples has cosmic proportions. Living the paschal mystery doesn’t just have consequences for ourselves, but also for all others. When we break out of a chronological understanding of time (that is, time as duration with the past, present, and future), and break into God’s eternal time (time without duration in which everything just is), we can begin to understand how even the little acts of kindness and self-sacrifice we perform each day affect all that is. Our unity with Jesus is deepened by

striving to care for others, help others, and shower others with dignity and respect.

Here is a sobering thought: the way we care for the children, are honest at the workplace, taking leisure time to care for ourselves affects our whole world and everyone in it. This is the privilege of discipleship: we can make a difference! This is the effect of faithful discipleship: the world is a better place – we have readied it for Christ’s Second Coming at the end of time by our faithful and grace-filled living now.

On this second-to-last Sunday and week of Ordinary Time, the readings continue to be “apocalyptic”, i.e. looking to the end times, the end of the world and our lives as we know them. How does this affect and touch your life?

- My most important beginning has been...My most important ending has been...
- To “secure” my life, I think I must...Jesus tells me I must...
- What gives me the strength to persevere in fidelity to Jesus’ name is...

About Liturgy: Ministry of the Assembly

When we speak about cosmic dimensions of our discipleship (as in spirituality focus, living the paschal mystery), it seems a bit too much for us to grasp. A reflection on the ministry of the assembly might help us make this more concrete.

When we think of “liturgical ministries” we usually think of the visible ministries, e.g. hospitality ministers, lectors, altar servers, Eucharistic

Ministers, etc. We can easily lose sight of an important ministry that has no “assignment sheet”: the ministry of the assembly, a ministry we all share each time we gather for Eucharist. The basic ministry of the assembly is to make visible the church, members united with our Head. This is how we can begin to grasp the cosmic dimension of our discipleship: we are never acting alone, but always as church.

Jesus promised that where two or three are gathered in His name, He is present. What is key here is not just the gathering, but the gathering in His name. When we gather as liturgical assembly, we unite the various members of Christ’s Body with the Head. The very idea of gathering, then, is an expression of who we are: the Body of Christ. All ministry is from the body to the Body.

When we absent ourselves from the assembly without good reason, we make a difference in how the Body is manifested. In other words, coming together for liturgical prayer is far more than fulfilling an obligation. The liturgical assembly bids us to surrender ourselves to the transforming action of the liturgy. This generous self-giving is the first step in faithful discipleship and is what church is really all about. It is necessary in order for church to be concretely and most assuredly visible. It is necessary if the Body of Christ is to be built up, to come to full stature. Our presence in and to the assembly is indispensable, for we are all members of the church, the one Body. When the membership of the liturgical assembly is diminished, the Body is diminished. It is a concrete expression of the cosmic dimension of faithful discipleship – Jesus’ kingdom is present through the

whole world throughout all times because we (all of us) gather.

The Floral Arrangement at the foot of the Crucifix has been placed to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Samuel and Agnes Rien, the parents of Father Robert. The Floral Arrangement at the Ambo has been placed to the Glory of God and in thanksgiving for the 90 years of life of Libby Ambrosini by the Ambrosini Family – Happy Birthday!

Third Quarter Financial Report

In today's bulletin, you will find an extremely well-done Third Quarter Financial Report. I hope you will look it over and review all the information placed there to give you the latest financial picture of the parish. I wish to thank all those who are so faithful and generous in supporting the parish financially. We would not be able to accomplish all that we do were it not for your Stewardship of your financial resources. And, I would challenge those who are not contributing regularly or who contribute nothing at all to support the parish. Ministry costs money – we would not have the staffing, the programs, the ministries, and outreaches we do were it not for consistent and generous financial support of the parish. Do your fair share! Be a “giver,” not a “taker!” Remember: God only asks for a tithe of 10% - we get to keep the remaining 90% !!!!!!!

The Closing of the Holy Door

At the conclusion of our 10:00 a.m. Eucharist this morning, we will process out through the Holy Door and then celebrate its ritual closing. This is a special time to reflect on all the graces, blessings, and abundance of mercy that

we have received during the Jubilee Year of Mercy from our Loving God.

Our Concert Series

The next event in our Concert Series takes place this coming Friday evening, November 18th, when **Bill Vaughan, Director of Music for Church of the Assumption, San Leandro, and Dean of the San Francisco Chapter of the American Guild of Organists,** performs a concert of orchestral transcriptions for the organ. The concert begins at 8:00 p.m. and will be followed by a reception in the parish hall. A free will offering will be accepted to help defray the costs of the reception as well as to provide a stipend to the artist. I hope you will plan to attend. Bill is one of the finest Organists in the Bay Area and he plays an instrument similar to ours for liturgy at his parish. He does an outstanding job of making use of the many MIDI voices available as well as the traditional wind-blown pipes.

Thanksgiving Baskets

One of the wonderful traditions of our parish takes place next Sunday, November 20th, the Solemnity of Christ the King, as parishioners bring Thanksgiving Baskets to each liturgy which are then distributed to needy families for Thanksgiving. An orange-colored flyer is in the bulletin with the list of items to purchase to feed a family of four for Thanksgiving. The box or basket can then be decorated appropriately, brought to one of the liturgies on the weekend of November 19th/20th and then will be distributed by our St. Vincent de Paul Society on Monday, November 21st. A turkey will be added to each box/basket at that time. Last year, 250 boxes/baskets were contributed and what a difference they

made in the lives of so many families! The need is very great at this time of the year especially so I am hoping that our parish will once again respond to the invitation to participate. Many thanks for what you will do to make it possible for needy families to celebrate Thanksgiving. Also, our adopted parochial school of St. Peter Martyr, Pittsburg, is participating in this outreach and last year, the students, families, and staff contributed 32 boxes/baskets!!!

St. Cecilia Sing

We are a member of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians and in conjunction with them, concerts, recitals, and choral festivals are being held all over the United States next Sunday, November 20th to honor St. Cecilia, the Patron Saint of Church Music. Our parish is participating once again this year with the celebration of Sung Evening Prayer on this day at 3:00 p.m. followed by a reception in the parish hall. I hope you will plan to join us in this service of praise and thanksgiving that honors St. Cecilia and asks for God's blessing on our parish music ministry.

Safe Environment Training

The Diocese of Oakland announces our affiliation with VIRTUS; an internationally known and well respected best practices platform for Safe Environment training. This training is available online and live, in Spanish and English. It is a comprehensive and multi-dimensional training that specializes in assisting churches and religious organizations in creating safe environments for children. Its mainstay course, Protecting God's Children assists the church in its efforts to recognize and stop sexual abuse.

As a community of faith, we believe that the prevention of child sexual abuse begins with each person. Increased awareness and a willingness to take action are steps for every person to take to eradicate abuse in our society, in the community, in the neighborhood, and in the family.

All those who minister (volunteers, employees and clergy) in the Diocese of Oakland are to be educated about the nature of child sexual abuse, how it is perpetrated, how to report it and strategies for prevention. Training is mandatory for all who minister, first before starting work or volunteering and then every 3 years thereafter. All volunteers in our parish, St. Ignatius of Antioch, are required to complete the training THIS year.

Two training options are available:

1. On line training or,
2. A live training session.

Whether you select the online training OR wish to attend a live training session, you must register online with VIRTUS. Today's bulletin includes a flyer with step by step instructions for registering with VIRTUS.

Once you register, you can select to attend one of the live sessions being offered at or select the online training. Our parish is NOT currently scheduled to offer a live session at this time, however, we are working to set one up in the near future. Watch the bulletin for the date.

Our parish homepage also has a link to the Diocesan website where you can get additional information and also begin the registration process.

Thanksgiving Day

Our National Day of Thanksgiving this year falls on Thursday, November 24th. We will gather for Eucharist at 9:00 a.m. and this is always a very special day of celebration for us. The homily this year will be given by **Larry and Jeanine Ford**. We will also be blessed by the gift of **Samantha Peralto** who will dance a hula of thanksgiving as a part of the liturgy. Those of you who were privileged to experience her dancing at the parish festival saw how beautiful, how prayerful, how sacred this was. Also, you are invited to bring your bread and wine to be blessed that will be a part of your Thanksgiving dinner. Tables will be setup across the front of the sanctuary on which you may place your bread and wine for the blessing.

Environment Help

On Friday, November 25th, we will say goodbye to our Fall Environment and the conclusion of the Liturgical Year of 2016. Many hands will be needed to make the transition from Fall to the beginning of the new Liturgical Year and Advent. We will begin at 9:00 a.m. and hope to be finished by noon. Coffee and pastries are provided as a part of our work and fellowship as well as lunch. All are invited!

Father Tom's Book of Christmas Meditations

A book of Father Tom Bonacci's Christmas Meditations has been published by "blurb.com, 580 California Street, San Francisco, CA. 94104, Suite 300" and is available for \$19.95 plus shipping and tax, bringing the total to \$24.75. This will make a wonderful Christmas gift.

Thanksgiving and Christmas Cards for Archbishop Brunett

Please do not forget to include Archbishop Alexander Brunett in your Thanksgiving and Christmas card list. His address is:

Archbishop Alexander J. Brunett
Archbishop Emeritus
Archdiocese of Seattle
710 9th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Get Well Cards For San Francisco Police Officer Kevin Downs

I invite you to join me in sending Get Well cards to San Francisco Police Officer Kevin Downs who was shot in the head and who has been released from the hospital and is recovering. Cards, good wishes, and remembrances of prayers may be sent to him as follows:

Officer Kevin Downs
c/o San Francisco Police Officers
Association
800 Bryant St., Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

The Smile For A Lifetime Foundation

Since 2010, I have been a founding member of the "Smile For A Lifetime" Foundation that has been established by **Dr. Robert Sheffield**. Since 2011, Dr. Sheffield has been providing free braces to underserved East County children. Every six months, six new children are selected by the Foundation Board to receive braces and orthodontic care. Our parish has not yet had a recipient for this scholarship and if anyone is contemplating or needing braces and has a financial difficulty, please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity and apply. Applications are available on line and are due March 30

and September 30. Please go on line to www.sheffieldortho.com to obtain the application. A flyer will be found at the back of my Insert.

A Liturgy of Remembrance Thank You

Last Sunday afternoon's Liturgy of Remembrance was a beautiful, prayerful, emotional celebration. Families gathered for Sung Evening Prayer at 4:00 p.m. Memory Tables, covered in beautiful bronze cloth, were prepared for photographs and other memorabilia of loved ones who have died, and especially those whose funeral liturgies were celebrated in our church since last All Souls Day. One of the most moving moments came when **Susan Batterton** lighted a memorial candle for each person whose name was read aloud. At the conclusion of the liturgy, the candles were given to family members as a gift from the parish. Following the liturgy, a lovely Wine and Cheese reception was held in the parish hall. Our thanks to **Frances Rojek, Sharon Simpson, Rowena Cayaban, Brian and Vicki McCoy, Bev Iacona, Nancy Newton, and Mila Rodrigo** for preparing and serving the reception. Also, special thanks to the members of the Choir who led us in our sung prayer: **Alicia Perez, Maryann Peddicord, Terry McNesby, and Gino Ramos** and performed the beautiful anthem, "The Cloud's Veil" composed by Liam Lawton. And to **Susan Batterton** who is responsible for facilitating this event each year.

Volunteers Thank You

We are blessed with a core of parishioner volunteers who do so much to keep our parish running. Our thanks to those who clean and prepare both the church and parish hall each week: **Jun Bajet, Angela Bueno, Kelly Wetzl,**

Tracy Wetzl, Mency Osborne, Rose Salomanca, Sofie Zimmerman, Steve Rojek, and Carole Miller.

...to those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Steve Rojek, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who washes and irons all the sacred linens each week.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.

...to our **counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week: **Sofie Zimmerman, Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Alicia Perez, Rowena Cayaban, Lorraine Lohmeier, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Bob Carvalho, Carole Miller, Dave Costanza and Estes Dimacali.**

A Francis agenda for the US bishops

Thomas Reese | Nov. 3, 2016 Faith and Justice USCCB Fall 2016

During the second week of November, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops will meet in Baltimore to consider a strategic plan to implement their priorities as a conference. Last November when the bishops set their priorities, some pointed out

that those priorities seemed little influenced by the papacy of Pope Francis.

The priorities they selected were:

Evangelization: Open wide the doors to Christ through missionary discipleship and personal encounter.

Family and marriage: Encourage and heal families; inspire Catholics to embrace the sacrament of matrimony.

Human life and dignity: Uphold the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death with special concern for the poor and vulnerable.

Vocations and ongoing formation:

Encourage vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, and provide meaningful ongoing formation to clergy, religious and lay ministers.

Religious freedom: Promote and defend the freedom to serve, witness and worship, in the U.S. and abroad.

"While I couldn't find any real problem with the five priorities," said Indianapolis Archbishop and Cardinal-designate Joseph Tobin in spring 2015, "I thought that they were quite closely a restatement of the priorities that this body has adopted in the past. And I was concerned that the newness that Pope Francis is bringing to the church universal ... would not be reflected in the priorities."

In other words, there is nothing particularly wrong with these priorities, but they don't sound like they came from Pope Francis. They could have been written before he ever became pope.

Last year, I suggested that a Francis set of priorities would look more like this:

- A poor church for the poor
- The church as a field hospital, a church of mercy and compassion
- The practice of synodality at all levels of the church
- The end of clericalism; the empowerment of the laity

- The promotion of justice and peace and the protection of the environment
- Or if the bishops wanted to have priorities in sync with Pope Francis, they could simply list the Francis documents they want to implement in the United States:
 - *Evangelii Gaudium*, his 2013 apostolic exhortation on evangelization
 - *Laudato Si'*, his 2015 encyclical on the environment
 - *Amoris Laetitia*, his 2016 apostolic exhortation on the family
 - The pope's Sept. 23, 2015, address to the American bishops

It is probably too late and too embarrassing for the bishops to change their priorities now, but it would be helpful if at their November meeting they passed a resolution stating their priorities and plans should be implemented in the spirit of *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si'*, *Amoris Laetitia*, and the pope's address to the American bishops. This would go a long way in responding to critics who say that the American bishops are out of sync with Pope Francis. It would put them on record as accepting these documents, which are defining Francis' papacy.

Such a resolution would put a different spin on the meaning of "evangelization" and "marriage and family" in the USCCB priorities. It would mean that evangelization programs in the U.S. should reflect in content and tone *Evangelii Gaudium*. It would mean that programs on marriage and family should reflect the content and tone of *Amoris Laetitia*. All old programs and policies would have to be reexamined to see if they reflect these documents.

For Francis, evangelization "is not about preaching complicated doctrines, but joyfully proclaiming Christ who died and rose for our sake." Francis also encourages a much more pastoral and less condemnatory

approach toward people. How the church approaches and accompanies divorced Catholics, gays, and those who disagree with the bishops would therefore have to change.

Likewise, the priority "human life and dignity" would have different meaning in light of *Evangelii Gaudium* and *Laudato Si'*. Concern for the poor and marginalized and care for the environment would become signature features of this priority.

Pope Francis does not have a document on "vocations and ongoing formation," but he clearly sees this as important, since the 2018 synod of bishops will be on "youth and vocations."

In the spirit of Francis, the American bishops need to encourage a conversation in the church in preparation for the synod, a conversation that should include youth of a variety of viewpoints, especially the large number of millennials who are alienated from the church.

Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego understands this and has indicated that his next diocesan synod will focus on young adults.

Nor does Pope Francis have a document on "religious freedom." As chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, I am delighted to see the bishops concerned about religious freedom abroad. (Opinions expressed here are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of the USCIRF.)

The bishops' views on religious freedom in the U.S. are more controversial. Perhaps the words of Pope Francis to the bishops are helpful here as elsewhere:

The path ahead, then, is dialogue among yourselves, dialogue in your presbyterates, dialogue with lay persons, dialogue with families, dialogue with society. I cannot ever tire of encouraging you to dialogue fearlessly. ... Harsh and divisive language does not befit the tongue of a pastor, it has

no place in his heart; although it may momentarily seem to win the day, only the enduring allure of goodness and love remains truly convincing.

The November meeting of the USCCB is an opportunity for the bishops to get with the Francis program and to make sure that their conference is traveling along the same path as Francis. Simply rubber stamping the same tired programs will not be helpful. The bishops have to show that they understand Pope Francis and support his change in direction, a direction that includes more dialogue, more pastoral sensitivity, and more compassion.

[Jesuit Fr. Thomas Reese is a senior analyst for *NCR* and author of *Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church*.

The annual Fall meeting of the bishops begins tomorrow, Monday, November 14th and runs through Thursday, the 17th. I invite your prayers for them as they meet in Baltimore.