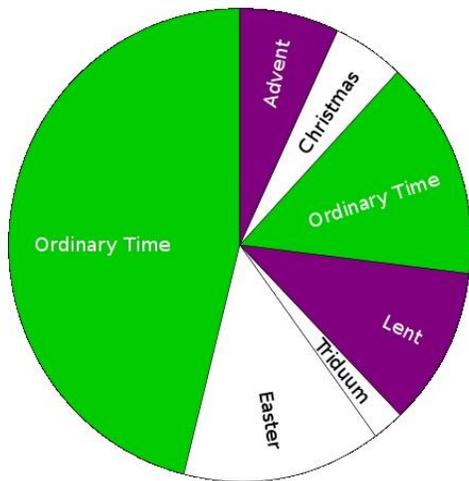


# ORDINARY TIME



The Liturgical Year of the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church is framed by the two great feasts: Easter and Christmas. The Liturgical Year begins with Advent, the season when we prepare for Christmas. Lent will then lead to the Easter Triduum and the Easter season.

In between the Advent-Christmas and the Lent-Easter seasons are what we call the Ordinary Sundays or Ordinary Time. It is a short-hand name for Ordinary Time throughout the Year (in Latin *tempus per annum*). The liturgical calendar of the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church was revised in 1969 following the reforms of the Second Vatican

Council. After 50 years we have become familiar with the term *Ordinary Time* for these “in between” Sundays.

Yet for some, the English word “ordinary” can also give the impression that these Sundays are not important. One consequence has been a tendency to introduce theme Sundays such as “Social Justice Sunday” and “Marriage & Family Sunday” into the calendar. While there are many important issues on which we need to reflect, the danger is that we lose sight of the essential meaning of Sunday.

Changes in society have already led many to see Sunday as just another day in the week. Then in 2020 the COVID pandemic made it more difficult for us to gather. For many months churches remained closed and in 2020 we could not even celebrate Easter. But for us it remains the day when we gather as a community to celebrate our relationship with God in Christ.

We celebrate our union with Christ most fully when we gather to celebrate the Eucharist together. In the Eucharist we become one with Christ in his offering of himself to the Father. It is for that reason that the Church teaches us that Sunday Mass is an important obligation because it is the best way for us to thank God for all that God has done for us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Paul Crowley*

Published in St Mary's Parish Concord Bulletin January 2021