

THERE'S NOTHING "ORDINARY" ABOUT FOLLOWING JESUS...

Written by Angela Anno

The Easter season is drawing to a close and soon we'll be back in "ordinary" time. But if there's anything that this extended celebration of the Resurrection has taught us is that there's nothing "ordinary" about following Jesus.

Like the disciples we've been called from our tombs of fear and timidity to live to live in boldness and joy proclaiming the good news and glorifying God with our lives. Resurrection grace has come through the locked places in our spirits as it did to Jesus' disciples, wished us "Peace," shared in our humanity and helped us mature in our faith.



Once we're back to "ordinary" time, is it like having the glow of a wonderful retreat wear off and getting back to business as usual? Not if we're committed to keep growing in faith, it isn't. And what about a parish community--as St. Leo's is half-way through its 125th anniversary year, is it enough to focus on the great good we have done during that time and rest comfortably where we are? That doesn't seem to be the way God works. There's always "more"—more gifts to receive and share, more ministry we're invited to, more depth to our relationship with God, more doors to unlock and walk through led by the Spirit into new lands we have yet to imagine.

One of the characteristic of this parish is that has always been called to walk in faith on untraveled paths into an uncertain future. It was this way with the German immigrant founders of St. Leo's and it's the same today when the congregation is mainly composed of Latin American immigrants and African refugees. God always seems to provide what we need when we need it—and not a moment before! We'd like a firm game plan and an abundant bank account. God seems to prefer trust and is calling us to a new way of being church, expanding our borders and enlarging our community of prayer and ministry with partner parishes.

And our God's dreams are always bigger than ours could ever be. Whenever I read that "God's power now at work within us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine," (Ephesians 3) I remind God of all the things that I can ask or imagine. And God grins and says, "That's a mere hint of what I have in mind. Just wait until you see what I have in store for you, for St. Leo's and all your partners—"You ain't seen nothing yet!"

Yet our all-powerful God, creator of the universe, who took on our flesh in Jesus, showed us how to live, died and rose from the dead can't work these wonders without our cooperation. God depends on each one of us to accomplish this. But this can't happen if we choose to go back into our ordinary patterns and get back behind our locked doors and stop growing. I hope none of us wants to do that. Maybe during this special year of anniversary celebrations we choose to live extraordinarily in Easter openness and grace the whole year through. Imagine what God could do with that!