

The background features several overlapping, wavy, curved shapes in various shades of orange and yellow, creating a sense of movement and depth. The colors range from a bright, vibrant yellow to a deep, rich orange.

*Making Ordinary Time
Extraordinary*

MAKING ORDINARY TIME *Extraordinary*

The Church's liturgical year makes celebrating seasons of anticipation, repentance and feast days a beautiful and wonderful experience.

One of the seasons that the Church calls our attention to is Ordinary Time.

Without the impending influx of activity that a new season or holiday brings, it can be difficult to know what to do and how to celebrate Ordinary Time.

Helping our students understand the beauty and importance of Ordinary Time will do them a great service in growing as disciples of Jesus Christ in their every day lives, and appreciating and understanding the other liturgical seasons.

Here are a few ideas to get you started!

1 *Plan an Ordinary Time Prayer Service.*

The best way to draw students' attention to how extraordinary Ordinary Time can be is to bring them together to reflect in prayer. Gather your group in the parish church. Share one of the Lectionary readings from Ordinary Time. Then, invite students to write down the "ordinary things" that they are thankful for in their own lives. Have students bring up their recorded "ordinary things" as a procession or offering. Pray together for the ability to see the beauty in the every day occurrences of ordinary life. (Download the corresponding Making Ordinary Time Extraordinary Prayer Service for additional guidance.)

2 *Examine the Ordinary in Jesus' life.*

Take time with students to consider what Jesus' everyday life must have entailed. Ask students reflection questions such as: "What do you think Jesus did each day? What do you think his every day relationship with Joseph and Mary was like? Remind students that Jesus was a carpenter. Discuss the world, geography, and climate during the time of Jesus. After a complete discussion, invite students to draw a picture of what Jesus' daily life looked like.

3 *Serving Others in Ordinary Time.*

Help students understand that we are called to make service part of our everyday lives by giving them opportunities to serve others during Ordinary Time. Remind students that it is important to serve others during times apart from the holiday seasons in which we traditionally give of our time and resources to others. Plan a service event that is appropriate for the age and number of students in your religious education program and one that is inspiring to or particularly needed by your community.

4 *Draft an Action Plan.*

Helping students understand how to embrace and live their faith in Ordinary Time will be crucial in applying their faith to their every day lives. After discussion, prayer and service, have students draw up a "Faith in Action" plan for the season of Ordinary Time. Give students a piece of paper and ask them to list ten things they want to add to their everyday lives in order to have a closer relationship with God. Then, have them write one specific, concrete way that they can make this happen. Finally have them write a letter to God asking for his help making this plan a reality.

Making Ordinary Time Extraordinary Prayer Service

OPENING PRAYER

LEADER: Lord, thank you for this time together. Please help us to understand the beauty of the liturgical seasons and to use them to come into better relationship with you.

ALL: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

READER: As they continued their journey [Jesus] entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary (who) sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak. Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me. The Lord said to her in reply, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.”

(Luke 10:38–42) The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION OF SCRIPTURE

(Discussion should be led and guided by a priest or catechist.) Discuss with participants that in our daily lives, we are called to put Jesus at the center. Martha and Mary are both able to be distracted by the business of every day life, but Mary chooses “the better part” by keeping Jesus as her focus.

GRATITUDE ACTIVITY

Give each student a sheet of colored paper. Invite the students to consider a few “ordinary things” that they experience every day. Examples may include getting together with friends, having dinner with family, going to school. On their sheets of paper, invite students to compose a prayer of gratitude to God for the every day gifts in their lives. Then, ask students to process forward to offer their prayers at the altar or prayer table.

LEADER: We know God blesses us with many gifts every day. These gifts may not be unusual, but that doesn’t mean they aren’t extraordinary. Today we offer God thanksgiving for the many blessings of Ordinary Time as we bring our prayers of gratitude forward.

CLOSING PRAYER

LEADER: Lord, help us to see the beauty in the ordinary times of our lives. Help us to know that you are with us every day. Please give comfort to those who do not have their everyday, ordinary needs met. Help us to always be thankful for the ways you bless us everyday. Let's pray together the Our Father.

ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as
it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who
trespass against us;
and lead us not into
temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

