

Ordinary Time

June 19, 2016 ♦ Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Zec 12:10–11; 13:1 ♦ Gal 3:26–29 ♦ Lk 9:18–24

A few years ago at the ice rink my daughters skated at, I picked up an ad for hockey gear. The pictures showed shoulder pads, shin guards, helmets, and chest pads. What caught my eye was the name of the company and the way they advertised. This was “Christian Protective Gear.” I immediately began chuckling to myself as I imagined the Apostle Paul calling on all of us to “put on the armor” of righteousness and wondering if this was what he had in mind (Ephesians 6:10–17). I think not, but the reading from Galatians reminded me of the ad: “you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” What does that mean for us today?

The Church teaches that we must show forth the love and mercy of God, especially with regard to the least and poorest among us. In a poem by St. Teresa of Ávila, we are reminded that “Christ has no body but yours, / No hands, no feet on earth but yours.” In today’s Gospel, Jesus says that to put on Christ is to follow in his footsteps, to take up our cross daily, and to lose our lives for his sake that we might find them forever. Most of us can get behind love, mercy, and compassion for others—at least in theory—but discipleship in its fullest is no easy task. Are we willing to live our lives as Christ even when it isn’t easy, when it requires denying ourselves and suffering? Only we can answer that, and with God’s help through grace and the sacraments, the answer can be “yes!”

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A Word From Pope Francis

“We can ask ourselves: Do I guard the treasure of grace? Do I protect the Holy Spirit’s presence within me?”

—“How to rout the demon’s strategy,”
Morning Meditation, October 11, 2013

June 19, 2016

dear Padre



What if we can't conceive?



How far is OK to go when dealing with infertility?



HYWARDS / SHUTTERSTOCK

Catholic teaching holds that procreation, along with the love expressed between spouses in the sexual act, is one of the principal ends of marriage. The act itself is holy within that context, and the resulting children are a fruit of that love and a gift—not a right of every couple. Most of us know couples who are unable to conceive. Sometimes a technique or medication can help, but not always.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that, “techniques that entail the dissociation of husband and wife, by the intrusion of a person other than the couple (donation of sperm or ovum, surrogate uterus), are gravely immoral....Techniques involving only the married couple (homologous artificial insemination and fertilization) are perhaps less reprehensible, yet remain morally unacceptable....Only respect for the link between the meanings of the conjugal act and respect for the

unity of the human being make possible procreation in conformity with the dignity of the person” (CCC 2376–77, see also *Donum vitae*).

Infertility treatments such as *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) not only depersonalize the sexual act but also carry the greater problem of the disposal of the fertilized but unused embryos, which are real human beings. When judging an act, we must consider our intentions and the act’s nature and ramifications. Most situations involve many issues, so I suggest you discuss yours further with a competent spiritual advisor.

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Monday
JUNE 20
Weekday
2 Kgs 17:5–8, 13–15a, 18
Mt 7:1–5

Tuesday
JUNE 21
St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Religious
2 Kgs 19:9b–11, 14–21, 31–35a, 36
Mt 7:6, 12–14

Wednesday
JUNE 22
Weekday
2 Kgs 22:8–13; 23:1–3
Mt 7:15–20

Thursday
JUNE 23
Weekday
2 Kgs 24:8–17
Mt 7:21–29

Friday
JUNE 24
Nativity of St. John the Baptist
Is 49:1–6
Acts 13:22–26
Lk 1:57–66, 80

Saturday
JUNE 25
Weekday
Lam 2:2, 10–14, 18–19
Mt 8:5–17

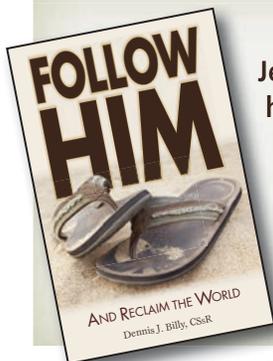
Sunday
JUNE 26
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
1 Kgs 19:16b, 19–21
Gal 5:1, 13–18
Lk 9:51–62

FOLLOW HIM

Jesus’ identity as the Son of God gives us an important key to understanding his life and mission. He lived and acted with a purpose hidden in the depths of his relationship with the Father. This relationship influenced his conscious thoughts and unconscious desires and lay behind his life in Nazareth, his ministry in Galilee and Judea, and his sacrifice on Golgotha.

–From *Follow Him and Reclaim the World* by Dennis J. Billy, CSsR (826504)

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