



25 October 2009
30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Parishioners,

Recently, I celebrated a school Mass. The students at Our Lady of the Lake were present, along with their teachers and some parishioners, though a number of students were home sick. It's that time of year, I'm afraid.

I talked about faith and what it means to believe. I said that, in Hebrew, the word faith is a verb, not a noun. And it means: "to lean upon another". I then demonstrated what I meant by leaning against the pew nearest me. And I asked if they had ever leaned on their parents whenever they felt tired, bored or hurt? Hands shot up.

Only when we are willing to lean on those we trust and love will we know the support that is there. Only when we lean on God in the midst of the uncertainties of life will we sense the Presence that is with us always. It is then we'll know our felt need for God who supports us through thick and thin. It is then we will arrive at the knowledge that we do not make it through this life alone. Learn to lean on God for this is what faith involves. This 'inclination' is inside us all for we are made for God. Inside us all, there is the basic need for another.

In his book **Why Go To Church?** Timothy Radcliffe, O.P. writes:

We come to church each bearing our private dramas of the past week, weighed down by the challenges of our families and jobs...opening our eyes to the people around us in the congregation, letting go the merely private story of our lives, remembering that these people are our brothers and sisters in Christ...each struggling in our own way to make sense of it. (p. 55)

We are, all of us "weighed down" in a number of ways and for a variety of reasons. And we practice faith when we lean on God and on others so that the "private dramas" of our lives might give way to meaning and hope.

Faith is a verb, not a noun. It is dynamic and must be practiced. And if we lean on God with faith and trust, then the eyes of our hearts will open to what matters.

Are we willing to lean and leave behind the fierce independence that separates us from God and one another?

Father Tim Clark