

## Friends

As I write this last thought for the week before the summer recess, I wonder how the year can have gone by so quickly. It is said that gardening is a hobby that is more often taken up by the older people in a community and that this is because time goes more quickly as we age. Certainly, I am more likely to be pleasantly surprised when I notice green shoots than my grandchildren, who may feel that they have been watching undisturbed patches of barren earth for “months and months”.

The sweep of the year, accelerating relatively as it does with age, increases our tendency to see everything hopping from one planning session to the next. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Harvest, Remembrance each come round in their time, and we lose a little of the importance of that “ordinary” or “proper” time as the Church calls the periods in-between. Some of you will have been in church when I spoke about it as the “great, green, growing time” which reflects on the idea that the liturgical colour for ordinary time is green. It’s easy to see this time as the boring bit that fills in between the lows of the traditional fasting seasons of Advent and Lent, and the highs of the great celebrations of Christmas and Easter, but it is more than that. At their best, these ordinary times help us to understand how to take our faith into our daily living. We can’t live on the mountain-tops of Easter and Pentecost, and neither should we live in the penitential seasons for too long. Instead, ordinary time invites us to reflect on daily bread for daily need; on a God who can calm the waters of the sea of Galilee but also calm the storms of our lives; a brother who walks out to us and holds us up when we are floundering, who helps our thinking, and eats breakfast with us when our thinking has finally brought in a catch; a shepherd who speaks to us of lost things: coins and sheep, brothers and sons, and promises us that the lost shall be found.

As we come into the holiday period, let us give God the glory for the ordinary times, for the daily living of food and drink, play and travel, friends and family, and yes, even life and death. For God is in all of these things and meets us in the highs and the lows, but also in the ordinary and perhaps there, in the

ordinary, is also where we grow as disciples, as prayer warriors,  
as followers of the living God.

God bless, Vicci