

# Pastor's Letter

## 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Church Family,

Over the course of my life, I have moved between fifteen and twenty times. That doesn't include going away to college or moves to different homes within the same city. While almost every change in location has been a positive experience, it has also meant that I have had to leave some things behind that I would rather have held onto; familiar faces and places that I have become comfortable with. Change requires us to let go of some aspects of the past so that we can embrace the possibilities of the future.

In our first reading for today, the people of the city of Nineveh are warned by God through the prophet Jonah that their city is about to be destroyed because of the evil things they have done. They pay attention to that warning and show that they are willing to change by performing acts of penance. They fast and put on sackcloth. God recognizes their repentance and spares their city. Repentance involves letting go of things that destroy our souls so that we can reconnect with God and receive life from him. That's not as easy as it might sound. Sometimes sin can seem attractive and fun and the damage it causes may not show itself immediately. It takes vision and determination to grow in holiness.

Accepting Jesus' call to discipleship also means letting go of some things, even things that are good, for the sake of other things that are even better and more important. In our Gospel reading, Simon, Andrew, James, and John hear the call of Christ and leave behind their familiar lives of fishing and family to follow Jesus and become messengers of the good news of the coming of the kingdom of God. They did it, not because their old lives were so bad, but because God had a higher purpose for them.

As Christians, all of us are called to be ready to let go of who we are now so that God can remake us into the people he wants us to be. St. Paul reminds us in our second reading that, "the world in its present form is passing away." If we want to be part of the new world that is coming, a world of peace, hope, justice, and love, and if we want to be part of bringing that world into being we need to let go of things that separate us from God by repenting of our sins and we need to be willing to let God lead us into new lives of discipleship and service. Now is the time to make that move.

Blessings,

Fr. Scott