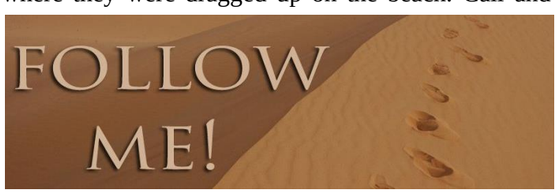
Third Sunday in Ordinary Time — January 22, 2023

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

It is interesting how power weaves its way through daily routine. We find security through work and play, but we bump into some authority or another defining our lives. We find that instead of shaping our own identity, we are being shaped by some power outside ourselves. Here all along we were buying, slogans like "Have it your way," yet in the process we were pledging allegiance to some principality or power out there. This is reflected in our dress codes, in the uniforms we wear. Walk down the main drag of a university town to see all the enforced dress codes. Adolescents self-consciously titter along, all looking like fashionably dressed college students, brand names blaring from every piece of clothes. The college students themselves walk more at ease in their wardrobes of jeans and sweats. In rebellion against such conformity, sullen punkers and rockers are outfitted solely in black and white, the only color being their dyed hair. All of these statements are made in the name of freedom of choice. There are authorities in the world with real power over us, and most of them function without our even knowing it. We are caught in our own nets.

Into this world Jesus walks. "Follow me," he announces, calling us by name. Jesus summons us to follow him and leave all our nets behind. There is a call here that demands a response, and a mystery in the invitation, for it comes with the authority of our Creator God. For those fishermen, the word goes out and does not return empty. Look at the nets lying draped over the rocks, the boats tilted at odd angles where they were dragged up on the beach. Call and



response. "Follow me," Jesus says, and they drop everything and go. "Follow me," Jesus says, and you see it happen again. A man who had finally achieved job security is called and he packs up his car, says goodbye to his friends and heads off to seminary, "Follow me," Jesus says and after three or four tough years he is crammed with term papers, finals, internships, and pastoral exposures, kneeling before an altar in a church packed with people; a stole is placed on his shoulders and he rises to assist at the holy meal. Call and response, "Follow me," Jesus invites, and the disciples drop everything and go. All of us got the same invitation as we went through the waters of baptism. Jesus walks into our world and calls us out of it. With the authority of the everlasting God, Jesus calls us by name and invites us to be disciples, "Follow me," Jesus says to his church. "Leave your nets and follow me."

The way of Christ we follow is different from all those worldly authorities. The invitation is to share in the work of Christ, to show forth God's dominion. Following Jesus leads you right back into the world, right into the thick of things, principalities and powers, principalities and powers and all. But those authorities no longer enslave.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**January 24**	**11:00AM**
J.R. Contreras †		Gina
Wed.	**January 25**	**11:00AM**
Jose Tuballes †		Gene & Marisa
Thur.	**January 26**	**11:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Fri.	**January 27**	**11:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Sat.	**January 28**	**4:30PM**
Steve & Teddy Gallo †		Family
Sun.	**January 29**	**9:00AM**
Lyndon O. Balagot †		Arturo Balagot
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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