

God Appears in the Ordinary

Greetings!

God makes ordinary things sacred. Water. Bread. Wine. Oil. These are simple items, yet they are transformed by God to impart to human beings the gift of God's own life. These gifts attain their highest purpose through God's transforming action.

We are human beings, which is to say that—unlike the angels—we are embodied. Our material nature means that we have need of things we can touch, taste, hear, see, and smell. That is why we need sacraments, which are visible signs of invisible realities. God reaches us through the material world because that is where we can be reached. God comes to us through the ordinary, and in so doing, the ordinary becomes sacred.

To help children understand this, parents and grandparents should reflect first on how they have encountered God's presence. Perhaps you have had the experience of feeling God's presence in nature or over coffee with a close friend. Perhaps you have heard God's voice in an unexpected way, through encouragement or challenge, in moments of suffering or gratitude. God speaks to us in a variety of ways. The sacraments are privileged moments of encounter, yet Pope Francis reminds us that each moment of our lives is an opportunity to grow in holiness.



Conversing with family about how God is acting in our lives can help us more readily see God within our daily routines.

God is always inviting us.

These moments when we feel God breaking through the ordinary become more apparent when we take time to notice them. You might write down one thing for which you are grateful each day. You might take five minutes to review the day's events to see where God's presence was most apparent. Over a meal with the ones you love, already a place of sacred encounter, you might converse about how God is acting in each of your lives in ways big and small. Making this a part of your regular family routine can yield big results in terms of seeing God's action bursting through the ordinary because, in large part, we only notice what we are looking for.

Put down the phone. Make time for silence. Take a walk. Look one another in the eye. It is through the world that God comes to us. It is our task to watch for God there and to listen for his voice. God is always inviting us. We are called to the Lord's table and to the dinner table, to the waters of Baptism and the water we pour for the one in need. We are called to recognize that we are always in the presence of God.