-Religion-

Ordinary time disrupted becomes extraordinary

Fourth Sunday in **Ordinary Time** Mark 1:21-28 Sunday, Feb. 3, 1991

Ordinary Time. When it's disrupted, it becomes extraordinary.

This is as true for us in Canada, as it is for those living in Iraq, Kuwait, Israel, Latvia, El Salvador, etc.

Ordinary time is important. Without it, the anthropologists say, we would have no culture. An appreciation of time, leads to the development of culture, culture meaning the proper way to live.

AND THE REAL PROPERTY.

Let's consider ordinary time more carefully.

We'll break it up into three separate, but overlapping, spheres of ordinary time.

Picture a Venn diagram. There are three interconnecting circles. Label the one on the left, work time. This is regarded as public time in our culture. Label the one on the right, family time. This is private time, unless you hire a cook who later write a book about your family life. Label the circle on top, prayer time. This is both public and private.

Depending on the particular social and personal value at-



Religion and Reality by Jim Ryan

tributed to each of the three spheres, the overall picture of ordinary time will vary.

For example: 1. A workaholic or graduate student may have their prayer and family time eclipsed by work time.

2. A person with children may have their family and work time integrated. For them, their family is their work.

3. A contemplative in a monastery may have integrated prayer and work time. Their prayer is their work.

In nineteenth century, rural Ontario, where the whole family worked the land, family time and work time overlap.

In more primitive cultures, work and family time are wrapped in prayer time.

If we consider the week as a unit of time, we can see how our culture breaks up time: we call it a work week, and then make time within that week for family and prayer. Family times is called quality time.

ORDINARY TIME AND SEX ROLES

In the 1950's in North America, work time was male time, and family time was female time. This has changed in the 1990's.

Work time is now both male and female time. Family time however, remains largely female time.

In some cultures, prayer time almost exclusively female time, except for the leaders of prayer time, who are almost exclusively male. In other cultures, prayer time is exclusively male, and occurs in a private area that is off-limits to women.

In our culture, public prayer has almost disappeared. When it occurs, it occurs during extraordinary times: Birth, death, sickness, marriage, exams, graduations, Christmas, Easter and wartime.

THREE DISRUPTIONS OF ORDINARY TIME

1. Unemployment. Pin prick that work balloon. It will affect family and prayer time.

2. Divorce. Pin prick that family balloon. It will affect work and prayer time.

3. War. Pin prick work and family balloons. (Unless you're a professional soldier, in which case your work is war). Political leaders will use the language of prayer, whil using war to cement the foundation for their next election win. (Margaret Thatcher did

this with the war in Argentina). American Armed Forces chaplains will see the world. The rest of us will pray for our lives and for the lives of our sons and daughters.

The disruption of ordinary time makes us realize how good ordinary time can be. Which is not to say that some times unemployment and divorce aren't better than some jobs and some families. I don't think we can say war is better than any ordinary

ordinary time might be. THE GOSPEL AND **ORDINARY TIME** Mark 1:14-39 is being read over

three weeks of Ordinary Time,

time, no matter how unjust that

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Division of Halton Floor Fashtone Ltd. last Sunday, this Sunday and next Sunday. At the beginning of these readings we see Jesus leave John the Baptist near the Jordan River and return to Capernaum near the Sea of Galilee.

He is entering upon his public work life.

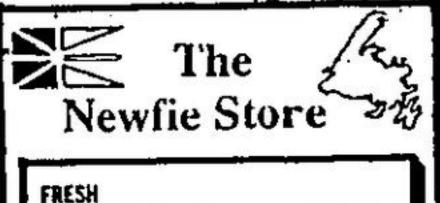
Last week we saw him in a work setting; this week in a prayer setting; next week in a family setting.

In each setting he speaks and acts in such a way as to teach about the Kingdom of God. As good as work, prayer and family time can be, Kingdom time is even better, and will transform work, prayer and family.

A HISTORICAL NOTE

The early Church refused to baptize professional soldiers. Hippolytus of Rome wrote this in his book, Traditions of the Apostles, around 215 A.D. Tertullian noted the same thing, but allowed for exceptions if the soldier promised not to execute men, or take the oath to the emperor.

The thinking at that time was that the soldier, like the pimp, the prostitute, and the gladiator, practiced a profession that was incompatible with a Christian



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Rev. Kenneth Gallinger

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visits church

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tends services.

Church.

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issues,"

with its members."

By COLIN GIBSON

The Herald

the corner of Mountainview and

Sinclair Avenue, played host to a

special and equally colorful guest

animated, open and frank, ques-

tion and answer forum much to

The Rev. Gallinger writes a

feature column 'The Question

Box' in the United Church

magazine Observer. He answers

questions from writers relating to

policies and practices of the

United Church and he does not

shy away from controversial

fervescent ordained minister,

one gets the impression he

relishes controversial issues as a

way of making people more

aware of the inner workings and

He describes his 'Question Box'

column as "entertaining as well

as informative" and admits that

at times he can get a bit

It is clear, however, he is con-

vinced the church has an impor-

tant and meaningful role to play

in our oft-times turbulent society.

teachings of the church.

In fact, in speaking to the ef-

the delight of those in attendance.

The Rev. Kenneth Gallinger

on hand to stage an

last Wednesday.

issues.

"playful."

St. Andrews United Church, on

He is fully behind the Canadian

Council of Churches stand

against the Persian Gulf War and

admits to playing a part in the

peace and anti-war movement

that blossomed in the United

States protesting the Vietnam

"Powers that be in the church are

the people in the pews." He

estimates, however, that approx-

imately only one-third of the

church community actually at-

In order to rectify this situa-

tion, Rev. Gallinger feels, "The

church must be more creative

and learn to communicate better

Rev. Gallinger's style might

best be termed, 'the height of

creativity,' at least in relation to

his activities within the United

Rev. Gallinger is also host of

the television program, The

United Church of Canada, which

is broadcast on Vision TV and can

be seen at 7:30 p.m. Monday

evenings. The program is re-

broadcast Tuesday mornings at

According to Rev. Gallinger,

this program deals with "in-

house and Christian living

To the Rev. Gallinger, the

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