

The Seasons of Ordinary Time

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By Lucia A. Silecchia

Recently, I enjoyed one of my favorite rites of autumn – the search for perfect pumpkins for home, office, and anywhere else that might be brightened with glorious gourds. In a long drive through quaint corners of the countryside, I relished the splendor that is autumn.

Yes, the pumpkins were the excuse for the journey. But the trip was made more beautiful by the showy splash of autumn surrounding the corn fields gone gray and the farmhouses hung with Halloween wreaths. There was enough of a crisp chill to announce that summer was gone. Yet, the bright sun that bounced off the red, orange and gold in the trees heralded a new season with a loveliness all its own. I rejoiced in the simple beauty of a world made new.

It will not be long until I marvel again when I awaken to the first snow that dusts my city streets. The silent brightness of that blanket, the sound of my neighbors' shovels that beckons me out of bed, and the hot chocolate I promise myself when I am back inside are all part of a new type of wonder. (I would rather ignore the icy sidewalks and high heating bill that will follow!) In this, I will rejoice again in the simple beauty of a world made new.

Just when the snowy season starts to lose its charms, there will be shy crocuses rising tentatively from the earth, faint traces of green in lawns coming back to life and trees getting ready to burst forth in the lacy splendor of spring. As the days lengthen and the sun grows brighter, I will rejoice again in the simple beauty of a world made new.

While I might, in the fullness of May, doubt that I would ever want to bid farewell to spring, a day will come when the days last long into the night, tomatoes ripen on the vine, and the beach beckons. Summer will hold joys of its own, and yet again I will rejoice in the simple beauty of a world made new.

I am deeply grateful to live in a corner of the world where seasons change around me and every few months life feels different.

Yet, it is not just in the world around us when seasons change. Life, too, has its own seasons.

Some of the people I admire most are those who have the faith and hope that allows them to welcome each new season of life with the same joy I have when I welcome the new seasons of the world around me.

Some seasons of life are filled with excitement and eager anticipation as the start of the adventures of a new school, new job, new home, marriage and parenthood. Some of those that are most important are those we do not remember well, like the transition from infant to toddler. Some are filled with angst – the so-called terrible twos and the terrible teens – and others with peace. Some seasons change of our own volition when we choose a new path. Other seasons come unwelcomed and unbeckoned.

Some are seasons of dreams fulfilled, and others are seasons when a dream moves out of view. There are seasons of suffering and loss that come to each life, and seasons to surrender the things to which we cling. There are seasons that are filled with companionship and those when, for a time, we find ourselves walking alone.

In the depth of our hearts, there are those seasons when we walk closely with God, and other seasons with the taste of the “dark night of the soul.”

As years pass and I look back at the ways in which life’s seasons have changed, I can see that there is, indeed, something to be grateful for in each of them. At the time, some have seemed to me far more beautiful than others. Yet, in their own way, each season of life made my own heart new – whether I wanted it to or not.

I hope that as I watch autumn unfold and winter follows, it will be a reminder to cherish each season of life --- to thank God for the blessings it brings, to ask Him for strength through what it may take away, and say a trusting “Amen” to every season of ordinary times.

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