

From the Pastor's Office

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Elijah the prophet was sent by God to anoint Elisha. God called Elisha to leave his family and go forth to do the work of God. But Elisha hesitated. He wanted to say goodbye to his parents first. The memory comes back to me from my Seminary days. I was going through a difficult patch and I missed my family. In a second, I knew I was gone. I remember talking to my mother on the phone. She picked up from the tone of my voice that I was missing home. She brought it up. She said, "I hope you are not thinking of doing something stupid like leave the Seminary and come home." Sheepishly, I asked her what she thought. She told me to make a deal with her. This is how she said it. "If you are missing us, we are missing you as well. So, let's make a deal to help each other through this. If we can bear to live without you, then you must bear to live without us as well." I am so grateful to my mother for saying these words. She set me free from my homesickness and my doubt. The one who follows the call of God must be willing to bear the sacrifice of leaving home and family. It is not an easy thing to do. Years have now passed. My parents are now deceased. My brothers and their families are getting on with their lives. My family now is the beloved parishioners at St. Catherine. I can't live any place else. When something bad happens to you, my parish family, I feel sad for you. I remember telling my family at home, you know where I am if you ever need a kidney. That is about as much correspondence I have with my family. This is the nature of vocation and following God. We give it our all. There is no regret. The inner voice listens to the voice of God alone. I don't have any regret. I don't miss home or my family. I have everything I need right here.

With love,
Fr. Pat