



## Is It Spring Yet?

One of the strangest customs that we have in our society is the anticipation of a groundhog in a small town called Pennsylvania called Punxsutawney coming out of its burrow and wondering if it will see its shadow. From this one particular animal's action we are supposed to know if we will have an early spring. I always wondered how one knows if the groundhog has seen its shadow (since groundhogs don't speak our language!) I could also never figure out what all those men wearing those top hats stand at the podium and wait for this groundhog to come out. One newspaper article recently stated that the custom has English and German roots, but beyond that, the rest is speculation. This event takes place every February 2.

Most of us are probably somewhat tired of winter and the snow no longer brings us excitement (although our snow fall this winter has not been too bad thus far.) Easter and springtime are still far way (regardless of what the groundhog says) and we find ourselves in an in-between time. Liturgically, we are in Ordinary Time, but within a month we will begin Lent. Lent can be a wonderful time liturgically as well as spiritually and I will share some reflections with you about that during the season that begins on March 1. However, let us not become discouraged or depressed during these waning days of winter. Let us remember that our Lord is with us through every season and every day. There can be a small rebirth or renewal every day of our lives. We can look around and see the goodness of God in people, in good-hearted deeds and most profoundly in our Church. Let us rejoice in what God gives us every day, no matter how far spring may seem. Even in the bleakness of winter, our Lord works marvels for us!

We have not seen the sun too much during recent weeks, and it is tempting to become discouraged or depressed with such weather. One thought that came to me during one of these bleak days was that I wasn't overjoyed with the weather, but realized the Lord was calling me to think about other blessings in my life and other things to focus on that would bring "interior sunshine": our relationships with one another, the joy of a delicious meal and most importantly, the ways our Lord nourishes us with His Word and Body and Blood. We all know the sun is still there behind the clouds and when it does finally appear, we will once again rejoice knowing that God has been with us all the time. We may not always notice Him, but He is there always watching out for us. The sun is always there and the Son is always there!

*Father David*