Seasons of faith: Summer.

How does summertime remind you of faith? At times we assume that our faith is not vibrant, full of life. Perhaps we think of ourselves as lacking faith. Consider summertime. As long as it rains, and it often does, everything grows. The grass grows fast, the trees, more slowly. We work to contain the growth and encourage the summer life according to our wishes. Yet in all the managing, we don't produce the growth. We defend what we have planted from pests and other plants that would overtake them, but the growth is a joyful mystery.

So it is with faith. We nurture faith in ourselves and others and it grows by nature. Unlike plants in the fall or winter, faith never stops growing. It might go "underground." It might be disguised. It might appear dormant, but it is always growing, and it never depends on us. We do not produce our own faith. Sure, we can be more aware or less aware of our faith, and clearly it is more helpful to be aware of our faith than not, but there are no "magic" formulas or necessary step-by-step processes for faith production. Faith grows as summer foliage: It just does.

Mingled with all the extra work managing the "growing season" of summer, we also rest (vacation!). Likewise, in our faith, we rest knowing that God welcomes us as children.   Baptism reminds us of the gift of faith and of our belovedness as children of God. All of life, faith included, is the gift by which we live in the presence of Mercy and Peace, with joy. You are beloved, foibles, "failures," frustrations, mistakes, disappointments, and all. Along with all of our gifts. No one is excluded in this giftedness and mercy. The family of God has no boundaries. Sure, we tend to set limits, but these are not the work of the Divine Mystery, the source and ground of all life. The true rest of faith, freedom, comes of listening to the abundance of God and trusting that this abundance is all we need or truly want.

Blessings on your summer and life of faith reflected in the abundance of summer!

Pastor Roy