

HOMILY ~ November 12/13, 2022

33rd SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

*There's a place for us,
somewhere a place for us.
Peace and quiet and open air
wait for us somewhere.
There's a time for us,
someday there'll be a time for us.
Time together with time to share,
time to learn, time to care.
Someday, somewhere,
we'll find a new way of living,
we'll find a way of forgiving,
somewhere.*

This is a very hopeful song. But that **someday, somewhere**, maybe that is here and now.

We are reaching the end of the church year. The new church year begins in two weeks with the First Sunday of Advent. The readings this time of the year are always about the end times and the time of our own death. In the Second Reading, Paul was addressing a particular problem. The people of Thessalonica believed that the second coming of Jesus was near, so they kind of gave up their commitment to live a Christian life. In fact, they gave up doing much of anything other than minding the business of others and nothing was getting done. They thought their **someday, somewhere** would come with the second coming of Jesus that would happen very soon, so they were just waiting for that to happen. Paul tells them that they have work to do in this world and so we do as long as we are here. We need to get on with living a Christian life. I think what is at the heart of living a Christian life is to have a purpose beyond ourselves. We need to use our gifts, our talents, our charisms, whatever you want to call them, to benefit others. It is what gets you out of bed in the morning. I think our purpose changes at different times in our lives. I think this is a good time, before the Christmas panic begins, to have a look at your life. Ask yourself what your purpose is and if it is still working for you, or if it has changed. Some examples: If your purpose has been to raise children and your children are now out of the house, you probably need to find a new purpose. Let your children launch and move forward with their own lives. Your role in their life will probably change. If you have recently retired, that work purpose, providing for your family financially, is gone. You cannot just focus on having fun yourself. Without a purpose, the fun times will not be much fun after a while. Maybe if you do not need to worry about finances, you can do some volunteer work or

something you have always wanted to do but never had the time. Once you name your purpose, look and see if you are spending a significant amount of time and effort in this area. You may need to adjust what you are doing. 43% of what we do every day is done out of habit, without thinking about it at all. Maybe you need to let go of old habits and establish some new ones. **Someday, somewhere** is here and now. We have work to do.

In the Gospel Reading, Jesus makes it very clear that we do not know when the end times will be. We also do not know when our own death will be. Everything that Jesus lists that will happen before the end of the world has already happened, so it could come at any time. We know intellectually that this could be our last day, but most of us think we will probably live well into old age. When we believe this, we can also believe our **someday, somewhere** is many years in the future. We do have the promise of heaven in our future, but we still have work to do here to prepare for that.

This is the question I want you to ask yourself today. *If this were the last day of my life, what would I regret not having done?* And I want you to think about your relationships. COVID made it very clear to me how important our relationships are. Social contact is very important for good mental health. We have become much too comfortable with isolation and divisions in our world today. Is there someone you need to apologize to? Is there someone you need to reconnect with? Is there someone you need to forgive or attempt to reconcile with? Is there someone you need to tell that you love them? The individual who is on the receiving end could die at any time as well. Are you waiting to talk about your regrets at their funeral? **Someday, somewhere** is now. Are you waiting until sometime in the future to start eating healthy, exercising and taking care of yourself? Are you going to wait until you develop a serious medical diagnosis to start looking at your options? I do this now because I will not be able to do my ministry, my purpose, if I get sick. **Someday, somewhere** is now. People stopped coming to Mass regularly during COVID. Some have not returned on a regular basis. I understand that some cannot come, so we will continue to do the streaming for now. Maybe it is time for you to push yourself to come back. Maybe it is time for you to get more involved with our Parish community. When are you going to make time for God?

Someday, somewhere is here and now.

Love & Peace,
Fr. Jim