

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B. 17th January 2024. Time is of the essence.

A few weeks ago, we celebrated the birth of Christ. We are in ordinary time now; in a short time, we shall start the Lenten season. This suggests that time is running out. As St. Paul observed in the second reading, he was not against our involvement with the reality of life nor stopping us from associating with our loved ones. As much as we embark on world activities, let us realize that time is of the essence. It should not be used for material purposes only but for spiritual benefits.

In our first reading, God called Jonah to carry out a message of repentance; Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh according to the Lord's bidding. Since time is running out, we don't have to delay responding to God's call. As Jonah took the message quickly to the people of Nineveh, the people also had a prompt response; they did not wait to see forty days elapse. Instead, they proclaimed a fast from the greatest of all the people to the least and put on sackcloth as a sign of their repentance. Looking at what is happening in the world shows that we all need repentance of heart so that God may not hold us responsible.

Beloved in Christ, God calls us daily to do a particular work as he chooses the disciples in the gospel reading, like Simon and Andrew, James, and John. We should not hesitate to say yes to His calling. Christ will not require us to neglect the jobs that we are doing presently, but we can respond to His call to make something good out of our present schedules. We must be the instrument of love to those we encounter.

Let us pray like the psalmist: "Teach me your ways, o Lord." The moment we know the ways of the Lord, the easier we answer His call.

Know that time is of the essence. We should not spend it doing unprofitable activities but reflect on the things of the heavens, our eternal home.

Peace,

Jingbe Simon