

Time....We are infused with the concept of time in today's readings. Not just *time* in general, but the shortness of time provided for us to accomplish that which we are called to do. There is an urgency in these readings, a sense that time's a-wasting....that the time is *now*.

This shortness of time is in our Collect, we hear: *Give us grace, O Lord, to answer **readily** the call of Jesus Christ....* Readily...meaning NOW. We hear this in our Hebrew Testament reading with Jonah giving his warning and the people of Nineveh responding, *timely*. We hear this in Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians that time is short as *the present form of this world is passing away*. And then we have our selection from the Gospel of Mark.

Mark is such a blood and guts writer....there is just no fluff, very few descriptors, just action...Jesus' actions laid out one after the other...Today's passage comes right after Jesus has been baptized, identified by God as Son and has just spent 40 days in the desert attended to by angels: and all of that in less than 12 verses. Today picks up with John the Baptist already arrested, Jesus' life course is set and he is going about proclaiming the good news....announcing himself, saying *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news. The time is fulfilled: the time is now*.

Jesus is starting his ministry and begins to build his community of followers today by the calling of the first of his disciples: Simon, Andrew, James and John. And they immediately stop what they are doing and *follow him. Immediately follow him*...The urgency in Jesus' stated mission, *the time is fulfilled* and his spreading of the good news tied to the immediacy of those four disciples' response, places an edge on this text....a sense of a stone rolling down hill gathering speed. Mark is signaling in these first 20 verses of this Gospel that this will be an intense ride, hang on....Time is short....the time is now.

We can also feel a sense of time being short in our communal life together. We certainly can feel this by the number of deaths that have occurred in this parish over the past four or five years. This sense of the fragility of time is acute here in Roseville right now. We want to make our mark here on St. Christopher's for the generations that come after us, not only preserving what is already here, but also readying the place for those people who have yet to walk through our doors. That is part of being good stewards: being sensitive to time, to an urgency to act upon decisions made...Being cognizant of responsibilities and commitments and living into those, recognizing that the time is now.

We all know that life is short, and that we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who walk the way with us. With that urgency, and our Gospel reading, in mind,

- The time is now to readily answer God's call to us.
- The time is now to recognize that the world in its present form is passing away.

- The time is now to participate in the fulfillment of Christ's call for us to create the kingdom of God.
- The time is now to immediately follow Christ's individual call for us to act, and as part of those actions, to embrace change.
- The time is now to engage in, celebrate and help manifest the growth and health and life of this parish.
- The time is now to tithe.
- The time is now to do everything we can to make this Holy Place grow.
- The time is now for us to allow old wounds to heal...to forgive...to move on...to not dwell in what has been but instead to live joyfully into the now and the future.
- The time is now for us to stop gossiping.
- The time is now, not tomorrow, to accept God's love of each and every one of us.
- The time is now, not tomorrow, but now, to love each other as we love ourselves.
- The time is now....We cannot afford to wait....The time is now.

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