



Sunday 24th January 2021

My dear brothers and sisters,

As always, I do hope you and your families are well and in good health this week. You continue to be in my heart and prayers.

It is now our third week of a national lockdown. I do wonder how you are coping and managing in these unprecedented times. I am sure many of you are working from home and undertaking remote learning for your children. It comes as no surprise that many of you are finding juggling your home/work priorities quite challenging in the given time. Time has very much been in my thoughts this week. I have spoken to so many parishioners and friends recently and very often the issue of time comes up. So I ask you the question - how are you managing your time? You may well say time management is easier said than done right now. There are not enough hours in the day. You are probably right. Why?

For the simple reason, we all manage time differently and we use it in different ways. Time is certainly an interesting notion and the cause of many headaches too. For some there is a danger that having too much time on their hands can lead to living complicated lives and by the same token not having enough time can also be a thorn in our side. This week, I want to explore the real meaning of 'time' and the value of it. Have you ever considered the value of time in your life? Do you appreciate it? Have you ever wasted it? Would you like to have more of it? Maybe the answer is yes to all of the above? Do you know that it is perhaps the most precious and valuable gift in the world? I say this for many reasons. However, before, I return to this, I invite you to reflect on the passage below...

Time is Gold

This is the story of a lazy man who was a friend of a king. One morning, the lazy man asked the king "why does everyone say that I can't do anything? and even when I go to get a proper job, everyone refuses me. My enemies have told everyone that I never do any work on time."

The king said, "Let's make a deal. Before sunset, you come to my treasury and collect as much gold and pearls as you can They will all be yours."

The man rushed towards his home to his wife. He explained everything and then after hearing the husband, the wife said, "Go and get the gold and gems now. Time is gold for you".

The lazy man sat down and said, "I can't go now, give me lunch first." After having lunch, he decided to take a nap but instead, slept for 2 hours. Then, late in the afternoon, he picked a few bags and went towards the king's treasury. On the way, he felt hot. So, he sat down under a tree to rest and ended up sleeping for another 5 hours.

When he finally reached the palace it was already late in the evening, it was the time for sunset. Therefore, the palace gates had been shut before he could reach there.

He lost the golden chance to get rich just because, he didn't know the value of the time.

Moral of the Story:

Time is precious. Spend it wisely and stop wasting time on unimportant things.

Each of us can probably resonate with this story at some point in our lives. What you consider to be a good use of time might not be the same for me and vice versa. If we take a moment to reflect how different cultures view time, we might be surprised what we learn? Everything is relative in life. It is what you make it. From my own experience and cultural roots, the time we make for others is simply priceless It is something you will never get back but the rewards you receive far outweigh that.

When someone gives us their time, offering a listening ear, they are indeed giving us gold. When someone leaves everything at a drop of a hat and runs to our aid they are indeed giving us diamonds. When someone is dying and we go to visit them, they have received a ruby. When someone provides practical advice and support they are unleashing sapphires. When someone stands up for you against all the odds, they are absolutely platinum. When someone feeds you, they are your silver.

Do you have such people in your life? Can you identify with such people in your life? Have you encountered timeless moments of joy, happiness and sadness? What am I saying? When you give of yourself selflessly to help others in terms of almsgiving, charity, listening, community service and prioritising your family over everything else, you are indeed giving them your precious time. All these acts are valuable gems that can never be replaced or exchanged.

This week, I invite you to treasure and value the gift of time because it is priceless. There is much I could and want to say on this subject and perhaps I will return it another time in the near future. In the meantime, I want you to know that we are a formidable community because of the time we give to each other. Never forget that I see and observe all your acts of love towards me and others. And so, I too invite you to spend a little time on self-love too. Please look after yourself and do take some time out to enjoy the good things on life. Everything will surely fall into place at the right time!

As I sign off, I wish you a blessed and peaceful week ahead. May God continue to be your guiding light. May his graces and mercies envelope you and your loved ones. We continue to remain united in prayer and love for one another.

Yours,
Rev Fr Nicholas Nwanzi