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Homily 33<sup>rd</sup> Week ordinary Time B

11-15-09

Summer has ended. (Pause)

Fall and Ordinary time in the church will soon end. (Pause)

The days are getting shorter. (pause) Darkness is settling in earlier. Its Getting colder. Ho Hum.

**So, How's it going?** I mean, really, how is it going?

Well I've got the answer to all of life's problems in this suitcase!

You know, Its great, if right now, things seem to be going well for you, but geez, there are times.....well it seems, no matter what we do, or how hard we try, its like, man oh man, what's the deal?

And today, the readings, all this about end times. A bit dark aren't they? Reading, listening, reflecting on the end times can certainly cause some anxiety.

What do the end times mean for us? Surely they will bring anxiety with them.

What is it in your life that causes anxiety, worry, stress?

Anxiety, worry and stress all come with being human. It seems at times we get bowled over with this stuff, noise in our lives.

We wrestle with pressing family issues, raising children in uncertain times, loss of a job or lessened job security, problems

with a co worker, divorce, Illness, death of a loved one....the list goes on and on.

Things we have NO control over. They keep us up at night.

We all come here today with our own story, our own set of circumstances.. With hungry hearts to be fed, fed by the Word of God.

And you know what? Jesus, The Word of God, loves us so much that he subjected himself to this “stuff” as he walked on earth.

He dealt with adversity, pain, suffering.....we saw Jesus advise Martha in Luke 10:41’ “Martha , Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things...in other words, sit down with me, take a moment, and listen, don’t just hear, but listen, let the words sink in, **and yet he** himself couldn’t sleep, agonized in the garden and in John 11:35 he weeped over the death of his friend, Martha’s brother..... All very human.

And at what point in time do we witness Jesus at his most human? **In Matthew 27:46** close to death he cries out. “Father, why have you forsaken me?”

So if you come here today, in your humanness, looking to be fed, to sink your teeth into something, how can you possibly find nourishment in todays gospel reading of the end times.

I mean isn’t the Gospel supposed to be about Good news?

Well my friends there is good news in the Gospel today. Did you catch it?

The God news is our humble and loving God has given us his grace His spirit.

He gives us the grace to know him personally and to accept him into our lives.

He gives us the power of the Holy Spirit to live each day for his kingdom, and the readiness to receive him when he returns. God's judgment is good news for those who are ready to meet him. bringing refuge to those who seek him.

And here it is: Jesus says today, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but only my words will not pass away."

And if we have his words in our hearts, hold on to them, what happens to us?

He says, "He will gather his elect from the four winds." He will send his angels to gather the faithful from all over the world.

Jesus, in the gospel of Luke has warned us not to be caught off guard when this time arrives.

"Of that day, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the son, but only the Father."

You see, if we focus on Jesus, utilizing the grace this gift he gives to us, we need not dwell and get anxious about the end times. For that matter anxious about anything else.

God has thrown us a rope, a lifeline through Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. To hold us secure in what seems to be end times. **(grab the end of the rope from the suitcase and pull it a bit out slowly)**

A few weeks ago, we had a chaplain preach here during our remembrance mass for all saints day.

Bringing healing to those who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

This woman spoke about faith and hope. She used a symbol of a sailor's cross, a cross with an anchor to illustrate the strength of faith.

This really touched my heart.. having spent many years on the water, I have experienced the anxious moments that come from a fast storm moving in. Seen the worry in the eyes of those on board with me.....and....

....And Motoring to a safe cove I have felt the assurance , the peace received by dropping an anchor into the deep water, feeling it set, and take hold on the bottom.

**(pull anchor out of the suitcase, lift it high!)**

**Faith is our anchor! We are anchored to God, through the living waters of our baptism!**

And it is through our baptism, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, We become connected, anchored, held fast in faith.

I found in the letter Paul to the Hebrews 7: 18,19 Paul says,  
“We who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm which reaches into the interior behind the veil where Jesus has entered on our behalf.”

Does our anchored faith right us, protect us, swing us around and point our bow to the wind,  
help us ride the waves of adversity, so that things we have no control over don't sweep us away in worry, crisis, the current of torment?

Jesus walked on the water, Peter went out to meet him... and when worried, he took his eyes off of Jesus and began to sink, but what happened?

He looked to Jesus, anchored in faith he reached out to his hand, grabbed hold, and rose to the arms of Jesus .

What makes you anxious, afraid, worried, concerned in your life now? Does anything stand out?

What causes unrest, pain? How do you find relief from this? Look to Jesus, talk to Jesus. Rise to his arms. In a few moments, during the communion rite, Father John will pray, Lord protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope For the coming of our savior Jesus Christ.

We all know that It's inevitable that an event will happen when the necessary **conditions** are **fulfilled**. The return of the Lord is certain, but the time is unknown.

Jesus warns his listeners to not be caught off guard when that day arrives. It will surely come in God's good time!

And the good news is that God gives grace, security, and refuge to those who seek him with faith and contrition.

Their reward is God himself, the source of all truth, love and everlasting life.

The people in Noah's time ignored the Lord's warning of judgment. They didn't need an anchor...They missed the boat.

Those whose hope and faith is firmly anchored in heaven will inherit the good news now and forever.

You may ask me, Deacon Bob, how do we really become and remained anchored in faith? Open your hearts!.....

...The Holy Spirit!...The Word of God.. love, love God, love one another, Use the talents, the charisms the Holy Spirit has placed within us through the waters of baptism to love God and one another as Jesus did and continues to do. Pray!

At baptisms I encourage the parents and god parents to watch their children carefully as they grow.

To look for the talents they have received from God

...one child may have a very compassionate heart for others, another may have a gift for music...another, the ability to relate well with others....all gifts placed within to enhance their lives and the lives of others.

For the common good. The Body of Christ. For the Kingdom of God on earth.

Come and receive and love!