

31<sup>st</sup> Sunday 2017

Tonight's the night! Tonight's the night when you turn the clocks back and you get the gift of one extra hour of time. (of course you'll lose it in the Spring) But just for tonight you can breathe easier knowing that you have this gift of an extra hour of time. And what will you do? What are your plans for this gift of time? How will you use the gift? Will you spend that time with friends and family? Will you stay up later to watch a program that is always past your bedtime? Or will you just get an extra hour of sleep. And when you wake, will you notice how the world has changed? (Well not really but at least there will be more early morning light)

The gift of time! It's just an hour but it always feels so very good! Perhaps this "one hour" can help us appreciate the gifts of time that are ours each day. I've been thinking of the gift of time especially this week. A former parishioner of mine was seriously wounded in the terror attack this past week. His name is Martin and he is originally from Argentina but has lived in Newton, Ma with his family for the past 8 years, He and his wife and two sons would come to St Ignatius, where I was pastor. They would usually come to the family mass but when other family members, like his mother and mother in law were visiting from Argentina they would come to our Spanish Mass to be part of the Latino familia, a family of Spanish speakers from all over the world, bound together by language and culture.

I visited Martin in hospital yesterday, ironically it happened to be the feast of St Martin de Porres, a beloved saint of Lima Peru. St Martin was a "mixed race" Peruvian, whose father abandoned the family and he grew up in poverty. He eventually became a Dominican lay brother. (He resisted becoming a priest. He wasn't interested in the pride of place and the best seats at the table) He was committed to compassion and care especially for slaves, native Peruvians. In his heart he knew that God is the Father/Mother of all and that all belong to the human family.

The other Martin from Argentina who was seriously injured in the attack lost 5 of his brothers/hermanos in that brief span of time. They were not “blood brothers” but brothers through time and shared experiences. As you probably heard they were on a 30<sup>th</sup> reunion, gathering together as a band of brothers to celebrate past time in the present time. But time was stolen from them. In a moment’s time, in an hour’s time, the world had changed for them.

I’ve used the word “family”, “familia” many times in this homily. I do for a number of reasons. The first reading reminds us that we are part of the human family. The One God is creator of us all and we are called to be in right relationship with God and each other. Listening to Paul today, you can feel his bonds of affection for the Thessalonians. They are his spiritual family. He has nurtured them like a mother. He has given himself completely to this family as a mother/father does. Jesus takes the religious authorities to task in the gospel because they seek their own prestige and power rather than using it for the service of the family of faith .

So what will you do with your hour of time? I hope you might spend it with “family”. Or maybe just thinking about the question “What can I do to build up the human family? How can I put into action the “law of love” that we heard in last week’s gospel?