

33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time- November 17, 2024  
Homily by Fr. Erel Villanueva

So, as we continue our worship today, as part of being as children of God, that every Sunday we gather together to worship God, and also together as brothers and sisters to give Him glory and honor and thanksgiving for today.

Our text today talks about the reminder of God that as we come to the end of the church calendar,

next Sunday we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King Sunday.

It is the end of the church calendar.

That's why He is the Alpha and Omega and He is the End.

So at the end, Jesus Christ is still the King.

Whatever happens this year, in the beginning and the end, still Christ reigns.

That is in the 24th.

That's why on the 30th, the whole body of Christ also celebrating it, they call it Jesus reigns.

Together with the body of Christ here in Aklan, in the Philippines, in the whole world, celebrate Jesus reigns.

That will be on November 30th, together with all members of the body of Christ.

So today, as we celebrate this Sunday, the Lord is reminding us, especially the topic of when it comes to Advent,

He will be coming, that Jesus Christ is coming.

This, what you call the teaching, had been taught before 2,000 years ago, that Jesus is coming.

Until now, 2024, at the beginning of Christianity, this message that Jesus is coming,

had already been preached and taught to the people and up to today.

So people at that time also expected that Jesus would come, so as also today.

But Jesus has not yet come.

But the thing is, although He has not yet come, His promise would stand that He is coming.

If He had promised that He would come in the first coming, that is in Christmas day,

He said He would also have the second coming and He would fulfill that.

And the thing in waiting, in hearing that He is coming and waiting, that's where the challenge is.

And yes, the Bible says that there are some signs, the signs of, you could say, the signs that there will be wars, there will be signs that there will be earthquakes,

there will be hatred in the families, persecution for the Christians, and you will be hated by people because of your faith to God.

And that's still going on from the start until now.

But much more challenging is this, in the area of waiting.

Because sometimes when the waiting is very long, a tendency for us is to doubt, is He really coming? To doubt.

Is He really coming because it's a long time already?

And even in our natural life, sometimes we are stressed and agitated to wait for people.

Especially when you have already said,

Okay, tomorrow at 9 o'clock we will see each other.

And 9 o'clock, let it come, 9.30.

So, it gives us that feeling that we are so agitated.

As we say, it's better for me to go and do it, rather than to do it.

And let's also hear, is it because the Lord is not fulfilling His promise?

The Bible says, no one knows, no one knows when He would come, but He would come.

And that would express our faith, believing that His promise is true.

And while waiting, yes, there will be some challenges.

Challenges in our faith, if He is really coming.

And not only that, it also, the Bible says here, especially in the last verse in our text,

that He said, you will be hated, you will be hated by all for my name's sake.

But he who endures the end shall be saved.

This is the cutting point here.  
Who will endure to the end?  
Who will wait Jesus to the end?  
Who will wait?  
Without wavering, without doubting, that He would come.  
See, that's not the question.  
This is like that, this is not, that's how you have started, how you are going to finish it.  
Because the Lord is coming.  
And also, if you have not, we say, while waiting for Jesus and we die, we come to Jesus.  
We are waiting for Him to come.  
But in our time, that time ends already, 80, 90, 100, finito, you're dead.  
You are, we are going to Jesus.  
So either way, He comes or we come to Him, we will see Him.  
That's why the message of Advent is prepared.  
But today, we talk about waiting.  
The elements in waiting here is a challenge.  
The challenge.  
Because some of us would give up believing that He is coming.  
If we give up believing He is coming, the promises of His coming, it also would drown down us noble that other promises is not true.  
If you cannot believe that the Lord really is coming, as He promises He is coming,  
then, the tendency is also, other promises will not be true.  
In a very simple way, if that people or that person cannot deliver His promise, the second He promises without,  
then He promises again.  
You hardly are ready to believe Him. You doubt.  
We'll see. We'll see.  
That's something that's running in our mind.  
We'll see if He delivers.  
Maybe you're not speaking it, but you're saying,  
in the back of your mind, we'll see if this person really delivers.  
Because He has promised many, many words.  
And if He does not deliver, that's why we doubt that person.  
So now, in this process, the Lord says,  
endure. That's the word there, endure.  
Endure.  
Those who endure, He said,  
those who endure,  
at the end, shall be saved.  
We say, save her.  
It's not just only talking about our visit to God,  
to be with Jesus when He comes,  
but also to experience His promises.  
To experience His promises now.  
Not only the promise that He would come to be with Him,  
but also His promises for us today,  
other things that He promised unto us.  
Not to give up. That's the word there.  
Not to give up.  
But endure, continue believing.  
See, this is something that we have to develop in ourselves,  
that endurance.  
That endurance.  
There was one word before, and it's Rosanna Ross, she said,  
tatagal ka ba?  
Could you endure at the end?  
O baka sa katunganan, magquit ka na?  
It's not how we started that makes things,  
but how you end.  
Hindi yung ano mong kumpisa ka, hindi yun, wala yun.  
Everyone could make a start, but the thing is,

could you finish it?  
Yun ang pinakamaganda sa lahat.  
Tinapos mo.  
And it applies in every area of our life.  
Whatever you do, whatever your goal, whatever your plan,  
finish it!  
Yun ang gusto ni Lord.  
So it applies not only to His coming,  
but also we believe that He's coming,  
but it also applies in every area of our life,  
that we are willing to finish what we have started.  
Ang tawag sa Tagalog niya, niningaskogon.  
Mag-uumpisa lang, pero sa katapusan, wala na.  
No?  
So here, He's telling us,  
He's telling us to endure at the end.  
The meaning, somebody has paraphrased endurance.  
It is a character that continues in spite of opposition,  
hardship, without intention to give up.  
That is endurance.  
It is a character that continues in spite of opposition,  
hardship, without intention to give up.  
So that's what the Lord wants us to develop.  
To wait.  
Patiently endure that He is coming.  
Wait for it.  
Wait for it.  
He shall come.  
And this is what,  
especially in the process,  
in the process.  
Because today, we have the process of everything is instant.  
Instant.  
Instant noodles.  
Instant noodles.  
Maraming instant.  
And today, the special generation wants to be instant.  
Tsampindot lang, nandyan na.  
That's what most of this generation today.  
They cannot wait.  
There are things that when you say, immediately they're there.  
But there are things in life that need process.  
You have to wait.  
You have to wait.  
And that development of faith is very crucial there.  
To develop our faith.  
To develop our faith to believe that He is coming.  
To endure.  
To wait.  
Ibang di ba di talaga makaantay.  
Nagumadali.  
There are process, there are things in life that you have to wait.  
The process.  
Like babies.  
You have to wait nine months.  
This is a process in everything.  
Because we deliver this process for everything.  
And here, there's a crucial thing here.  
It is an ability, a character who would continue in spite of opposition and  
hardship  
without intention to give up.  
We are not going to give up our relationship to God.  
We're going to wait.  
Because our faith would be challenged.

Our faith would be challenged.  
And not only in the area of waiting from the Lord, but everyday.  
Everyday challenge to us.  
Everyday struggle.  
Maybe you're waiting for healing.  
The instant healing.  
And the healing, it will take time.  
Maybe you're waiting for an answer for your prayer.  
You're waiting for an answer for your prayer.  
That prayer will be answered right away.  
But until now, maybe one month, one year, two years, five years, six years,  
you're still waiting.  
You're waiting.  
And the struggle is there.  
To wait.  
And the pressure around you is tantamount.  
It should be there.  
But one thing for sure, when you pray to God,  
when you pray to God,  
it's always according to His will and according to His timetable.  
We cannot, because you're praying,  
you don't use prayer to force God to answer.  
He will answer it always in the right time.  
So, sometimes we struggle in waiting.  
We become impatient.  
But the Lord is developing in us first our faith.  
Because time sometimes is very crucial in our faith.  
You wait because you believe.  
And because you believe, you can wait.  
You can wait.  
You can wait because you believe.  
And you believe, that's why you can wait.  
To develop our faith.  
And also to develop our patience.  
Patience.  
The Bible says, let patience.  
And James said, let patience do its work.  
So that we will, what you call, be matured.  
Learn to be patient, to wait.  
Maghugat.  
Because everything is in the process.  
No, we struggle while waiting.  
We struggle in the process.  
We want to expedite everything.  
We want instant, but we have to wait.  
And while waiting, there is always a struggle.  
There is a struggle.  
Kung talaga at our mind are doubting, maybe He would answer or not.  
But one thing for sure, we have to also examine ourselves.  
Why?  
Why it takes long? Why there is a struggle?  
The first question is the Lord.  
Am I in the midst of your will?  
Does what I am asking from you is in the midst of your will?  
It is your will?  
Because if it is the will of God, it shall come to pass.  
Maybe there is an obstruction from the enemy,  
but if it is the will of God, don't give up.  
Another thing, if it is not the will of God for you,  
so you ask God, it is your will, Lord?  
Because no amount of endurance,  
no amount of patience, no amount of perseverance  
that would make whatever you ask from God to come to pass  
because it is not His will.

Even you say you are a strong-willed person,  
maybe you are just a hard-headed person to push through  
because it will not work.  
It is just a waste of your time, energy, and money.  
So ask God, Lord, is this your will for me?  
If it is the will of God, then wait for it. Hang on.  
Don't give up. Don't give up.  
That's the word here, don't give up.  
Don't give up. Don't give up.  
It is the will of God.  
And that's why we have to develop our faith.  
Faith here is very crucial  
because without faith, you will not wait for God.  
Doubt will come in.  
But if you believe it is the will of God for you,  
it is your goal, it is your plan, Lord,  
you know that God will bless that.  
I know what I'm talking about,  
especially when waiting for something.  
Are you praying for something?  
Until now, still praying?  
Whatever it is.  
When I was still in the ship working as a seaman,  
I used to board the ship by worldly way.  
One worldly way.  
Maglagay lang. Under the table, sakay na.  
No problem. Give money.  
Give money to the company, you will...  
When I got born again, I got the Bible.  
I said, this is not right.  
It's unfair to those other seamen who have no money.  
I have experience. I have already finished my one-year contract.  
Still, they are there waiting because they have no money  
to give to the company.  
I said, this is not fair.  
So I choose to believe God.  
But the thing is, I have no connection.  
So I pray to God, Lord,  
sasakay ako ng barco na Ikaw talagang pasakay sa akin.  
Hindi maglalagay ng pera.  
That's what I do.  
So, it takes me six months, one year, two years,  
two years and a half.  
Now, the waiting now.  
That's what I'm talking about, the waiting.  
Plus the pressures around.  
My parents said,  
what are you doing here in Manila?  
Kung hindi ka makasakay, uwi ka na lang dito.  
Mga ganon pressure ba?  
Yung mga naghahanap ng asawa diyan.  
Yung pressures palikit.  
Ngayon, wala pa ang asawa? Wala pa? Wala pa?  
That's the pressure around you.  
Tendency to also have to...  
Parang kung sino lang dyan, sige, sige, sige.  
Kung sino lang dyan, sige.  
No, no, no. Wait for the right person.  
So, I'm so discouraged.  
Two years and a half.  
Tendency now, my mind starting to doubt.  
And tendency to go back.  
Lagay ulit, give money.  
So, I'm so discouraged.

Sometimes that's alright.  
It happens to you when you're waiting for something,  
praying for something,  
that can't come for many times.  
Then one time,  
I was watching basketball.  
At that time, 80s,  
where the PBA is very strong,  
unlike today.  
The championship is between  
Ginebra and Shell.  
Best of seven series.  
At that time,  
the score,  
3-0.  
Zero ang Ginebra,  
three ang Shell.  
The Shell team needs only one win.  
They're the champion.  
First time in the PBA history.  
Then what happens?  
Fourth game,  
Ginebra wins, 1-0.  
Fifth game,  
Ginebra wins, 3-2.  
Then,  
the sixth game,  
Ginebra wins, 3-3.  
Then, championship,  
best of seven,  
Ginebra wins.  
You know?  
Out from the 3-0-3,  
they win.  
And the announcer has said something like this,  
struck me.  
He said,  
this Ginebra team,  
they have a never say die spirit.  
They refuse to die.  
They refuse to give up 3-0.  
But they refuse to give up  
fighting every game to win.  
And yes,  
they won the championship.  
That struck my mind.  
I would have a never say die spirit.  
Don't give up.  
So, what I did?  
Wait, pray.  
And here's something.  
While praying,  
while waiting,  
some people,  
I don't know what happened to their faith,  
become, lie low.  
Lie low.  
Lie low, Saginaw.  
Lie low in their commitment.  
I don't know what happened.  
Lie low.  
Maybe there's a problem,  
or there's a risk, whatever.  
Lie low in their commitment.

That's not to be.  
While waiting, continue.  
Continue.  
That is the spirit.  
That is the spirit.  
Continue what you have to do.  
So, I pray.  
I always go to church.  
I pray to God,  
Lord, help me.  
I always go to the company.  
I continue to apply.  
And you say, sorry, no vacancy.  
Continue to apply.  
Some people, because they're discouraged,  
they stay at home.  
Because they're discouraged.  
Hmm?  
And what would happen if you're discouraged?  
What would happen if you give up?  
Tell me.  
What would happen if you give up?  
What would happen?  
Huh?  
And that's what the enemy is waiting for you.  
To lie low.  
Because you're now weak.  
He could bring everything anew.  
That's why continue.  
Continue to be strong in the Lord.  
While waiting, continue.  
Continue what you are doing to do.  
Not lie low,  
or your commitment is  
becoming weaker.  
Because maybe of some problem,  
or maybe some other priorities.  
But continue what you have to do to God.  
Continue to be strong in faith.  
So I did that.  
Then one day.  
One day.  
Somebody introduced me to a woman in the church.  
Said,  
Are you a seaman?  
Yes, ma'am.  
Somebody said, yes.  
Come to the office on Monday.  
Okay.  
I said, okay.  
This is my calling card.  
I got that office.  
I got the office.  
And oh my God.  
Very good company.  
This is a Norwegian company.  
Ping.  
Money, money.  
Norwegian company gives high salary.  
Yes, Lord.  
I could smell.  
Monday I came.  
And I said,  
Who is this woman?

That woman.  
She's the manager.  
So I came to her office.  
I said, okay.  
Complete, okay.  
Next month,  
she came to board the ship.  
My goodness.  
I don't know this woman.  
But the Lord used this woman.  
And you know where I met her?  
In the church.  
In the church.  
I always look for her,  
but I cannot look for her.  
One day,  
I don't know why I...  
I was late.  
Maybe I'm late.  
I don't know why I'm late.  
To the midweek service.  
So the midweek starts at 6 o'clock.  
So it's now 6.30.  
I'm late.  
I don't know why I'm late.  
But there's a purpose.  
As I go in the door,  
she's also coming out.  
Ah.  
You.  
Yes, ma'am.  
It's me.  
So we're the one in the lobby.  
We meet in the lobby.  
So I believe it's God's predestination  
I'll be here.  
That I'll be late at this time  
because this woman would also go out early.  
And that's the time.  
And yes, it is.  
I was boarded a Norwegian ship.  
With high salary.  
I said,  
it really pays off to be patient.  
Never say,  
die spirit.  
Don't give up.  
Whatever God has promised,  
whatever you're asking from God,  
be sure it's in the will of God.  
Wait for it.  
Wait for it.  
It shall come to pass.  
Why?  
Okay.  
Verses here in Hebrew.  
In Hebrew.  
Our second reading.  
Look at that.  
In Hebrew.  
Our second, it tells us.  
Hebrew chapter 10.  
Verse 23.  
Let us hold fast the confession of our hope



without wavering,  
without doubt,  
for He who promised is faithful.  
Whatever the promises of God in His word,  
whatever we ask from God in line,  
in line to His will,  
it shall come to pass.  
Because He is faithful.  
Maasahan.  
Hindi tayo ilalaglag ni Lord.  
Maasahan ng Kanyang promises.  
He is faithful.  
He is faithful.  
That's why trust Him.  
He is coming.  
He is coming.  
Don't waver.  
Don't doubt.  
He is coming.  
And the last verse, second verse also,  
is in Hebrew chapter 6.  
Chapter 6, verse 10 to 11.  
For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor for love.  
God will not forget what you have done to Him  
for His church.  
He will not forget.  
Hmm?  
Whatever you have done for His church,  
to God,  
your service,  
your giving,  
God will never forget that.  
He said here,  
for God is not unjust.  
Hindi siya unfair.  
To forget your work,  
your work of love,  
your giving,  
your praying,  
God will never forget that.  
And which you have shown toward His name,  
in that you have finished it to the saints,  
and do ministry,  
what you have done to God.  
Your service,  
your ministry,  
your time given to ministry,  
your help to other people,  
God will not forget that.  
And we desire that each one,  
you show same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end.  
Don't give up.  
Continue doing the good work.  
Don't be weary.  
Continue your ministry.  
Continue what you have to do.  
That you do not become sluggish.  
Tinatamad na.  
But imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promise.  
Through faith and patience inherit the promise.  
Because God is faithful.  
He is faithful.  
That's why we just said He is coming.  
He is coming.

Wait for it with endurance.

And wait for it with continuing doing what we have to do for God.

Please stand.