

File

Baccalaureate Mass  
Holy Cross High School  
Everett, Washington  
June 7, 1996  
Most Reverend Thomas J. Murphy  
Archbishop of Seattle

“There is an appointed time for everything...a time to be born, and a time to die...a time to weep and a time to laugh...a time to keep and a time to lose...a time to embrace and a time to be far from embrace....” Yes, the words proclaimed to us this morning for this Baccalaureate liturgy are very familiar. The writer of God’s Word tries to capture in human language the broad and wonderful experiences that belong to you and to me as human beings in our world today. Yet, as these words are shared with you, it is amazing how many of these experiences you have had in your short lives.

But this is also a special time for you, the graduates of 1996 of Holy Cross High School. It is that unique time of transition from adolescence to adulthood. It is a time of decision, a time to look to the future, a time to appreciate the joy of being young. Yet, in many ways, high school graduation is especially *a time of grace*.

What do I mean by “*a time of grace*?” A time of grace is that moment when a good and gracious God wants to be a part of your life. It is a time when in the midst of all the parties, the celebrations, the gifts you hope to receive, you take some quality time to appreciate a God who has gifted you in ways you never dreamed possible, a God who loves you unconditionally, a God who calls you to share divine life that will enable you to live forever. Yes, this is a *time of grace*.

However, the challenge you face, as all of us do, is whether you will take the time to appreciate this God who loves you and wants to share blessings with you. What blessings does God want to offer to you? That is the message of Jesus in today’s Gospel. Jesus wants to offer you His kingdom. Jesus wants to give you consolation and the vision of God. God wants to share with you the incredible gift of having your fill of happiness and joy beyond your wildest dreams. Yet, these blessings do not come automatically to you. You are asked to take the risk to be poor in spirit, to hunger and thirst for holiness, to be peacemakers, to even be persecuted as you seek to live out what it means to be daughters and sons of God.

For others in our world today, these are indeed challenging times as well. For Dennis Rodman's barber, there is the ongoing challenge of a new haircut design. For the Sonics, there is the challenge now of winning tonight and then three straight in the Key Arena. For some here tonight, this could well be a time to seek reconciliation with friends or family before you move on. It could be a time to say "thank you" to countless people who have shared so many gifts with you that you could well take for granted. Yes, my friends, this is a *time of grace*.

My prayer for you this day is for you to recognize and appreciate a God who loves you and wants to make this moment in your life an incredible time of grace and peace, hope and joy. Yes, there is a time to be born and a time to die...a time to love and a time to hate...a time for every affair under the heavens. But, my young friends, this could be an incredible moment in time for you if you allow God to be a part of your life now and in the years ahead. It can be a *time of grace*!