

Homily for 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Pay attention! Pay attention!

How many times have we heard those words? I remember as a child hearing that phrase over and over again (I was forever distracted.)

How many times have frustrated parents screamed “Pay attention! Pay attention!” as their daughter or son begins the process of learning how to drive? How many times have we said to ourselves: “If only I had paid attention?” If I had to summarize the meaning of today’s readings, it would be in those two words: **pay attention!**

Moses in the first reading is saying: “Pay attention, O Israel.” Pay attention for God is the one Lord. Pay attention and write these words on your heart.

Jesus in the Gospel takes these words one-step further. For not only should we love God with all that we are, we should also love one another with the same concern we have for ourselves. Jesus is saying...pay attention. Pay attention because if you cannot live these words then you will never understand the Kingdom of God.

On this last weekend before we go to the polls and elect a new President and countless civic officials, the Church says to us...Pay attention. Pay attention to our responsibility to vote. Pay attention to what is not a luxury in our country but a privilege. And exercise

that privilege with care and concern for the good of our country and of our sisters and brothers who are our fellow citizens.

On this first Sunday of November we are called to pay attention. Pay attention to those whom we have held so dear to our hearts and who are no longer with us. Pay attention to praying for the dead and to assist them on their journey home to God. Pay attention so that we might wrap our hearts around the souls of the just who have touched our lives and helped make us who we are today.

Pay attention! Pay attention! For our faith calls us to live in God's love. Faith calls us to exercise our care for each other in everything that we do and in the exercise of our civic responsibility. And faith calls us to never forget that those who have died are still part of our lives and we shall never forget to keep their memory burning in our hearts and in our prayers not only this weekend and this month but throughout our lives.