

Living in God's Time

We talk about having time, making time, and wasting time. We spend time, kill time, and count time. Time flies and time heals. It appears that “time” is quite the companion on our human journey!

The Church also speaks in a special way about time, using two words coined by the ancient Greeks. *Chronos* is clock time—as we indicate in the word *chronological*. It's the seconds, minutes, hours, and years of our lives.

Kairos is a different kind of time. *Kairos* speaks about the quality of time. It's what we mean when we speak of the “right time,” the “perfect time,” or an “opportune time.” It could be a rich moment or an extended period of clarity and presence. Many of us have had experiences that were so crystallized that we felt as if time stood still. That's *kairos*!

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When we speak of “God's time,” we use the word *kairos*. It is the “fullness of time,” as mentioned in Paul's letter to the Galatians (4:4–7), and what the Second Letter of Peter references with the statement “with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day (2 Peter 3:8). *Kairos* is the space in which the temporal and the eternal meet. When we are swept up in prayer, when we are no longer checking our watch. When we are fully in the moment, we are in the sacred time of *kairos*.

A wise Benedictine scholar and professor regularly asked his students, “Are you an openness, or a closedness?” Upon hearing this, the students became a bit testy, and not just because the sentence sounded odd. They wondered what it meant to live as an “openness.” Some of the students began thinking about the question, and one began observing stunning sunrises that had gone unnoticed on her long drive to class. Another found himself stopping and looking at the beautiful, small gardens that peppered the campus.

As Christians, we believe that the universe is pulsing with the grace of God. We only have to stop and see to begin expanding our experience of sacred time. In Mark 8:18, Jesus



When we live in God's time, we are able to take in what the divine has presented to us.

asks all of us, “Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear?” What are you not seeing? Hearing? Sensing? Feeling? Have a conversation with your children about how you “spend” your time. Do you rush a lot as a family? Do you make time to sit and have an evening meal, lingering and talking for a while? If time was truly something precious and sacred, how would you spend it differently? Let your inquiry into sacred time be rich. Our God-in-time will be with you!