

Pastor's Column

Clock Time and God's Time

As we end 2011 and begin 2012, I share with you thoughts from Fr. Henri Nouwen. May his words be a source of strength and direction for you as we all move along the continuum of time and space!

Give Your Agenda to God

You are very concerned with making the right choices about your work. You have so many options that you are constantly overwhelmed by the question, "What should I do and what should I not do?" You are asked to respond to many concrete needs. There are people to visit, people to receive, people simply to be with. There are issues that beg for attention, books it seems important to read, and works of art to be seen. But what of all this truly deserves your time?

Start by not allowing these people and issues to possess you. As long as you think that you need them to be yourself, you are not really free. Much of their urgency comes from your own need to be accepted and affirmed. You have to keep going back to the source: God's love for you.

In many ways, you still want to set your own agenda. You act as if you have to choose among many things, which all seem equally important. But you have not fully surrendered yourself to God's guidance. You keep fighting with God over who is in control.

Try to give your agenda to God. Keep saying, "Your will be done, not mine." Give every part of your heart and your time to God and let God tell you what to do, where to go, when and how to respond. God does not want you to destroy yourself.

Exhaustion, burnout, and depression are not signs that you are doing God's will. God is gentle and loving. God desires to give you a deep sense of safety in God's love. Once you have allowed yourself to experience that love fully, you will be better able to discern who you are being sent to in God's name.

It is not easy to give your agenda to God. But the more you do so, the more "clock time" becomes "God's time," and God's time is always the fullness of time.

—Rev. Henri J. M. Nouwen,
*The Inner Voice of Love:
A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom*

Happy New Year! As we move into 2012, may our "clock time" become more and more "God's time." And, in that reality, we will find joy and peace because we are living in the fullness of time!

F. N. Mike