

Many years ago, when I was in the seminary, about the time our seminarian Daniel was in kindergarten the rector told us a story about his first days as a priest. Immediately after he was ordained, he was sent to replace a hospital chaplain who was taking some holidays. At the time the sisters were still present in the hospital and one of them was dying. She was a tough character, no nonsense, had been in charge of the place at one time but now she was bed ridden in pain, with terminal cancer. He went to visit and he tried to talk her up, provide some comfort; he was try to be a good priest.

Eventually she had enough of him and said, "Father if you wish to be helpful bring me the Eucharist." Father if you wish to be helpful bring me the Lord.

The miracles of healing from today's Gospel are a result of those who seek out the Lord. The woman with the haemorrhages reaches out to touch Jesus and the father of the young girl seeks him out to bring the Lord to his little girl.

In our own lives- are we authentically seeking the Lord? Are we allowing the Lord to touch us?

Today I preach my last Sunday homily as pastor of St. Paul's. And I pray that I was helpful in the way the good sister spoke from her death bed. Father bring me Jesus. Because in the end the rest doesn't really matter. Because in the end the life of the priest really has no other purpose. In the sacraments the priest brings Jesus to us.

Our first reading today from the Book of Wisdom speaks about our mortality, about death. "For God created man for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own eternity."

In the choice of readings for funerals one of the options comes from the end of the Book of Revelation. St. John's final vision is that of the

heavenly Jerusalem and Jesus, seated on the throne, says “I am the Alpha and the Omega-the beginning and the end.” It begins with the Lord and it ends with the Lord. And what do in between? Remind ourselves from where we came and keep focused on where we are headed. We have been made in the image of God’s eternity and the one who will bring to the fullness of eternal life is the one who came from eternity-our Saviour the Lord Jesus. He who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

My 9 years here at St. Paul’s have been part of my journey in that in between time. It has been a time to share that journey with you. I pray that my time has helped you in that journey as well and increased your conviction to do, as the characters in today’s Gospel, to seek out Jesus with fervour, ardor and faith. I pray that not matter what you are going through in life you may never lose sight from whom you came and towards whom you are going, Jesus the Alpha and the Omega.

I thank all of you for your kindness, love and support these last years. If I, in any way, hurt you or caused you any harm I ask your forgiveness. Please remember me in your prayers and be assured of mine and remember smile- God loves you.