

As we begin our meeting today, the first time we come together this year, I want to talk about a profound and inspiring quote from Pope Francis:

“Time is a treasure that all of us possess, yet we guard it jealously, since we want to use it only for ourselves. Let us ask for the grace to find time for God and for our neighbour — for those who are alone or suffering, for those who need someone to listen and show concern for them.”

Let’s explore about what this means for us as young people today and as we continue our participation in the Pope John Paul II Award.

****Understanding the Message:****

1. ****Time as a Treasure:****

- Pope Francis begins by reminding us that time is a valuable gift that each of us has. Unlike material possessions, time is equal for everyone, and how we use it can have a profound impact on ourselves and those around us.

2. ****Guarding Time for Self:****

- It’s natural to want to use our time for ourselves—our activities, interests, and relaxation. However, Pope Francis encourages us to look beyond ourselves and consider how we can use this precious resource for a greater purpose.

3. ****Making Time for God:****

- Finding time for God doesn’t necessarily mean extra hours in prayer or worship, though these are important. It can also mean living out our faith in everyday actions, showing gratitude, and being mindful of God’s working through us, His presence in our lives and in the world around us.

4. ****Time for Others:****

- We are called to extend our time to others, especially those who are lonely or in need. Small gestures—a conversation, a helping hand, a listening ear—can be incredibly meaningful and align with the teachings of Jesus to love and serve our neighbour.

****Practical Ways to Live This Message:****

1. ****Daily Reflection:****

- Set aside a few minutes each day to reflect on how you spent your time. Ask yourself if there's a moment you could have used differently to help someone or to connect with God.

2. ****Volunteering:****

- Find opportunities in your school, church, or community to volunteer. Activities such as helping at a local food bank, visiting the elderly, or participating in community clean-ups allow you to dedicate time to others.

3. ****Active Listening:****

- In our busy lives, truly listening can be challenging. Make a conscious effort to be present when someone is speaking to you. Showing genuine concern and interest is a simple yet powerful way to use your time meaningfully.

4. ****Balance:****

- While it's important to give time to others, it's equally crucial to balance it with self-care and personal time. Make sure your schedule reflects a harmony of service, worship, and personal rejuvenation.

****Conclusion:****

As we reflect on Pope Francis' quote, let's strive to view time not just as hours in the day, or as activities on our record card, but as opportunities to enhance our relationship with God and those around us. Let's open our hearts and schedules to make time a shared gift rather than a private possession.