

**Fr. John Sassani**  
**Homily Given on November 11, 2010**  
**Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**Liturgical Year C**

Discouragement seems to be a part of life. Perhaps it's caused by an expanding waistline and a seeming lack of willpower. Perhaps there are weak and fragile relationships in our lives. Perhaps we are hungry for more. Perhaps we are fearful of death. You may be discouraged by some or all of these; I certainly can be sometimes.

People were discouraged in Jesus' time too. In the conversations that we hear in the Gospel today, some people have hope in everlasting life, but some do not.

Two generations later, St. Paul wrote encouraging words to the Thessalonians. One of my favorite pieces of Scripture is from Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians. It goes, "We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

In Paul's Second Letter that we hear proclaimed today, he tells the Thessalonians that they have everlasting encouragement and good hope, through the grace of God. This is not pie-in-the-sky hope. This is not the "power of positive thinking". This is real hope that comes from the Risen Christ. This hope is not only about life after death. This hope is about reconciling and strengthening those broken or fragile relationships. It is about pushing back against hunger – for example, in the 300 people served at the Shattuck Shelter by our Christian Service Committee with food donated by you. It is about addressing systemic hunger, as in the education provided by the Justice and Peace Committee. It is about having the willpower to persevere, strengthened by grace and prayer.

All of us who are begotten at Baptism and strengthened by the Eucharist are called to live the hope of the Christian life, which culminates in the hope of new and everlasting life in Christ.

Today, as we come to the Eucharist, let's receive and give the hope that our faith offers us, so that, day by day, we may come closer to Kingdom of Heaven.