

## **“The best time of my life”**

### **Brief Homily on Sunday, September 7, 2025**

**Dear church,**

This service is about enjoying the power of communal singing and therefore I will keep my message quite short today. You notice that all the hymns we are singing today are structured around one theme: the stages of life. That made me wonder about all of us who are here today: what was the best time of your life? Was it a time of great success in your career? Was it innocent play and careless days when you were a child? Was it when you became a father or a mother? Or when you felt a deep sense of purpose and mission? A specific life-changing moment? Was it when you retired, and the pressures of work dissipated?

If I asked you for an answer to this question, some of you could probably point out your favorite time of life right away. No hesitation, hands down, “That was the best time of my life!” Others might be more diplomatic about it. “Oh, I don’t know. There was good and bad in all of it. It was all good.” I can also imagine people saying to me, “I don’t remember the best time of my life, but I sure remember the worst.” It’s easy to remember the worst. Well, try to remember the best time or times of your life for just a moment and appreciate that time as God’s **eternal** gift to you. It can be good to remember when you were most alive.

For Bryan Adams, the Canadian singer/songwriter, clearly there was a best time of his life. In his song, “the summer of 69,” he eulogized that time when he bought his first six string guitar, founded a band, fell in love and enjoyed life.

*“Oh, when I look back now, that summer seemed to last forever*

*And if I had the choice, yeah, I’d always wanna be there.*

*Those were the best days of my life.” (“Hey!”)*

That song, much as I love it for its vibe, feeds a lot of clichés. The assumption is that when you are young and the world unfolds for you and you start to come into your own, that those are, by definition - the best days of your life. A common theme in pop culture... But that’s not always the case. Sometimes people wreck their youth or drink away their young adulthood or experience hardship early on or are too afraid to believe in themselves. Did you hear the new Nike slogan? It’s no longer, “Just do it!” It’s now called “Why do it?” It was changed for the young people of our time who often feel anxious and under the spell of perfectionism. The company is desperately trying to reach adolescents who don’t see this as the best time of their lives.

I think the message given to us through the hymns and scripture verses for today is that - no matter how you view your current situation, whether it's great or good enough or a mixed bag or really challenging and painful, God is with you. God is not a good weather God. And God is not a bad weather God. God is an all-weather God, with you ALL THE TIME, in good days and in bad days and also during those days that you won't remember because of the mundane everydayness that gives your memory nothing to latch on to. In those days, God is there as well. In you. In us. In this time and place. Through all stages of life.

Amen.