



“HEAVEN AND EARTH WILL PASS AWAY, BUT MY
WORDS WILL NOT PASS AWAY.” - MK 13:31

33RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Our Lady of Peace Church

Sunday, November 14, 2021

FROM THE DESK OF FR. STAN



My dear friends,
Coming to the End

As we approach the end of this liturgical year (the new year will begin on the First Sunday of Advent), our readings offer reflections about the end time and final judgment. We need to be careful, however, with our understanding and interpretation of these passages by paying close attention to the type of literature they are. The book of Daniel, from which our first reading (Dan 12:1-3) is taken, contains what is known as apocalyptic literature. As such, this literature normally arises during times of intense persecution, when there is little hope for the people in terms of politics or history. In apocalyptic literature there is a dualism between the forces of good and those of evil; there are visions and revelations; there is a contrast between the evil present age and the glorious and hopeful age to come; and, most importantly, there is reassurance that those who are faithful to their God will ultimately survive the times of trial and receive an eternal reward. Apocalypse is an offshoot of prophecy, but in a more extraordinary and fanciful form. It is not history as such, but it is a reassurance that God is in control of history, and that life follows, and wins out over, times of struggle and suffering.

Thus in our passage we have an acknowledgment of the time of trial. “At that time there shall arise Michael, the great prince, guardian of your people; it shall be a time unsurpassed in distress since nations began until that time.” But then we find reassurance: “At that time your people shall escape, everyone who is found written in the book.” There will be judgment and punishment of evildoers, “but the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament, and those who lead the many to justice shall be like the stars forever.”

Our gospel reading, Mark 13:24-32, is an example of apocalyptic literature within the larger gospel. Again, it is not meant to be taken as strict history, but as a reassurance and a warning. “In those days after that tribulation the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in the clouds’ with great power and glory, and then he will send out his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.”

Jesus then presents an image that encourages his followers always to live in preparedness. “Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates.” One of the great questions that has held the interest of believers and students of the bible is when all of this will happen. Our passage ends with a powerful reminder that it *could* happen very soon, even in our lifetimes, but *one cannot pin down the date* for the end. “Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

Of course, there is always a temptation to think that one has it all worked out. Many years ago, there was a huge convention of a particular religious group in the city of Springfield. The leaders had announced that the end of the world was coming on a particular date, and the crowds gathered in anticipation of that event. In the end, the day came and went, and the world as we know it still goes on. The members of that group seemed to have forgotten the call to humility found at the end of today’s gospel reading (not even Jesus knows the day or the hour).

However, for most of us, I think we have another problem that today’s readings warn against: complacency. There are many calls for preparedness in the Scriptures, reminders that God will come “like a thief in the night”. Maintaining a state of readiness over a prolonged period of time can easily fade away, and we can become lax or lukewarm in our practice of the faith. Perhaps it is good that at certain times we receive reminders that we are not in control. Such an occasion for me was a couple of years ago when I missed Christmas and was in the hospital with a serious infection. That was a wake-up call, reminding me that I do not have all the answers, and that I do not control everything. At the same time, I had no fear of death because, deep down, I knew that our God is merciful and forgiving, and that he will, as Jesus teaches, “gather his elect from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.”

HEARTFELT THANKS to the Our Lady of Peace Women’s Group for the very successful Bazaar! It seemed that people were aching for the opportunity to get together, to do some Christmas shopping, to find surprising treasures—coming out of the Covid hibernation and trying to feel more normal once again. To all who worked at the Bazaar, to all who contributed, and to all who supported the effort: thank you for a job well done, and an uplifting experience!

NEXT WEKEND Fr. Douglas McGonagle, pastor of the Greenfield churches and a member of the diocesan vocations team, will be the celebrant and homilist at all our Masses, to speak about vocations.



Saturday, November 13—Rosary at 3:15P
 4:00P *Edward Pelis, Sr. & Marjorie Petrin*
 by Ed & Dottie Pelis

Sunday, November 14
 8:00A *Philip "Mitzi" Croteau*
 by Michael Croteau & family
 10:00A *For all the names listed in the*
All Souls envelops on the altar

Saturday, November 20—Rosary at 3:15P
 4:00P *Marcum family*
 by Gay & Cathy

Sunday, November 21
 8:00A *Paul Socquet, Sr.*
 by the Community Meals Group
 10:00A *No intention*

DAILY MASS

Monday, November 15
 8:00A *Paul Socquet, Sr.*
 by the Morning Mass Group

Tuesday, November 16
 8:00A *No intention*

Wednesday, November 17
 8:00P *Pat Caloon*
 by John

Thursday, November 18
 8:00A *No intention*

Friday, November 19—Holy Communion Service



Please remember in your prayers all those who have died
 +*Maureen Shanahan*
 +*Paul Socquet, Sr.*
 +*Annetta Aldrich*

Our Lady's Window

November 15
Bill Mroz
 by his family

PARISH COLLECTIONS

Weekend of **November 7**
 Regular \$3,309.00
 On-line \$799.00

We appreciate the continued support of your parish!



AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM at Montague Catholic Social Ministries is in need of snacks for the kids. The school day is long and snacks are appreciated.

RCIA for anyone interested in learning about Catholicism will meet Sunday, **November 21** at 9:00A in the rectory. We will not meet **November 28** due to Thanksgiving weekend. Call Marguerite 863.2585 ext. 103.

Thank You for joining Us at Mass
LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH!

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MEMORIAL DONATIONS have been made in memory of **Paul Socquet, Sr.** by the Farr-Marcum family; and the Justice & Peace Commission in memory of **Sean Connelly** by the Farr-Marcum family.



RECTORY OFFICES will be closed **November 25-26** in observance of Thanksgiving. We wish everyone a blessed day with family and friends!



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