

33RD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

Malachi 3: 19-20

2 Thessalonians 3: 7-12

Luke 21: 5-19

HOMILY

As we come to the close of the Liturgical Year our readings point the coming of the Day of the Lord.

- In the Old Testament it was the **great and terrible day**

Q: But how literally should we take what the scriptures say about the end of time?

CREED:

In the creed we profess that ***“he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead”***.

This is our faith, this is the faith of the Church!

NB: For sure the end of the world is a **popular topic** among some religious people.

NB: But it is still **impossible** to know **details** about the end of time.

There are **sects** and **groups** who claim to know the **exact date** of the Lord’s coming.

- ❖ Funny enough, the **failure of previous predictions** does not seem to discourage them from settling on **another date** for Armageddon.

We live today under the threats of global warming

Certain **weather conditions** may trigger signals of the end of times:

- with **glaciers** melting,
- **ocean levels** rising
- **Flooding** and **storms** everywhere
- and some **species becoming extinct** through climate change.

Some **“street-corner orators”** delight in warning us about catastrophes about to befall the sinful world.

- ❖ Jesus warns against believing such vivid and detailed predictions.

Even though he himself used the **idea of the judgement day** as a motive to turn people’s hearts back to God, he admitted in very certain terms that ***“no man knows the date, not even the Son, but the Father only.”***

- ***“Refuse to join them”***, is Jesus’ message to us today
- ***“Do not be frightened”*** is his assurance.

At the same time there are so many references to the Final Judgement in the scriptures.

- We can’t just regard them as merely a figure of speech.

EXPLANATION

“Refusing to join them” and

“not being frightened” does not mean that

- a. we believers should feel disinclined to think about the last things.
- b. It does not just mean that we should be like Martha in the Gospel: fully occupied with what needs to be done in the immediate here and now, busy with many things – with no spiritual horizon.

That horizon of the end of times should always be with us here and now.

- ❖ It is about keeping some balance in the midst of our daily activity.

EXAMPLE:

We can appreciate the practical advice given by St Paul in the second reading to people who were looking out excitedly for the Lord’s return and neglecting to earn their living. ***“Go on quietly minding your own affairs,”*** he says, ***“and if anyone will not work, neither let him eat!”***

Therefore, while we refuse to join them, while we do not get frightened it is important for us, as believers, to know that **the end is sure but not yet**.

With this in mind we are better off being concerned with

- helping ourselves
- helping our neighbours,
- caring for the sick, and
- comforting the afflicted.

It is not in our mission to get stuck into working out details about the end of times.

Jesus refused to answer the question: ***“When Lord, will it happen?”***