

THIRTY - THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 11/14/2021

In the last 100 years, we have witnessed two world wars, the assassination of John Kennedy, and even an attempt on the life of pope John Paul II. Then there was the 9/11, global terrorism and the church racked with a horrible scandal.

Add to all that hurricanes Katrina, terrible earthquakes, tsunami's, fires and droughts.

*On top of all that we have today's scripture warning us of dire catastrophes/disasters to come to the whole universe. That is why some of the more fundamentalist's religions tell us the times are so bad that the **end is near**, and some will say it is God's punishment for our sins.*

***First of all**, the Catholic outlook is that our God is not a God of wrath and revenge, but rather a God of **Mercy**. Jesus revealed that.*

Today's readings indeed sound scary but we must keep in mind that Jesus is simply using the language of His culture. He borrows imagery language from the prophets. While we take apocalyptic language seriously, we do not take it literally.

*In fact, the central message of this week's readings is that the more difficult times we encounter in life the nearer we are to God. Our Faith calls us to embrace God's **closeness** rather than our **fears**. At the first glance one could see today's readings and the times we live in as a **gloom** message. But a closer reading reveals a message of **hope** for all of us, especially for those living in **gloom** situations. In the meantime, we keep in mind that **God is near, at the gates** - the gates of our hearts.*

***Therefore**, we live as a people of **hope** - like the leaves on a (fig)...tree in the spring - do you and I see signs of **hope** in our midst? With the eyes of Faith are we able to read the gentle signs of God's presence amid the turbulence of our lives?*

***With the church year** coming to an end, the scriptures call us to reflect on the shortness of our earthly lives and to prepare for our **death** by living according to Jesus' word - a word that is summed up in loving God and one another.*

***There** was an undertaker who closed all of his letters with the words: "**Eventually yours.**" This is why you and I can leave here today radiating **joyful hope**, because as we come to Him in Holy Communion, "**He is very near** right now, and **eventually we are totally His.**"*