

Today is the Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, which is close to the end of Ordinary Time, which includes all Sundays which are not during the seasons of Advent, Lent, Christmas, or Easter or during some other feast day. And they're called Ordinary because they are counted, they are in order, they are ordinal or ordinary. But as Sundays, they remain as special as all fifty-two Sundays are during the year. Next Sunday, which by the way is called the Feast of Christ the King, but is, in fact, the 34<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, will be the last Sunday in Ordinary Time and the end of the Church's liturgical year. There's a word. *End*. When you get to the end, you are finished, there's no more, that's it, caput, it's all over. Whatever you are talking about is *done*.

However, the week after the last Sunday in Ordinary Time starts something new, a new liturgical year. Something *different*, the season of Advent, *replaces* Ordinary Time on the Church calendar when we get to the end of the old year. Did you ever watch a cartoon or a movie and when it's over, you see on the screen, "The End"? What do you do? You watch another cartoon, or another movie, or perhaps you might take a nap, or you might even get up and go outside (once upon a time). In other words, you start doing something different. A couple of weeks ago was the last day of October, the end of October. Then what? November started.

Now is a good time to go to our first reading, from the Old Testament (the part of the Bible which was written before Jesus was born). Today's reading comes from the prophet, Malachi, about four to five hundred years before Jesus was born. Malachi means "my messenger" in Hebrew. While there has not been agreement as to what the real name of the prophet Malachi really was, whatever his name was, he was a prophet, which means he could hear the Word of God and tell it to the people, including *us*, in the Bible. And here's a bonus fact. The book of Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament.

A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi (**Mal 3:19-20**)

The Lord says this: “That day will surely come! It will be like a red-hot furnace, and its flames will burn up proud and evil people, as though they were straw. The Lord all-powerful has promised that not a branch or a root will be left. “But if you honor My name, justice will shine like the sun, and its rays will bring healing.” The Word of the Lord.

After the priest finishes his homily at Mass, we stand to recite the Nicene Creed. In the Nicene Creed, there is a line of our beliefs that says, “He (Jesus) will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.” So this is what Malachi is describing, that is, what sorts of things will be happening when Jesus comes at the end of the world. People will have their final judgment, depending on whether they were good or bad while they were alive. The world will end, and what will take its place is the Kingdom of God. And, as we say in the Creed, the kingdom of God will have no end.

One more prayer reference. Jesus taught all His followers the Lord’s Prayer, the Our Father. This is a prayer in which we ask God for some things, things like our daily bread, to forgive us our trespasses, to deliver us from evil, and so on. As you know (or should know), The prayer begins, “Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come...” With that line, that petition, that request “Thy kingdom come,” we ask God for His kingdom to come. And according to the Creed, that is supposed to happen at the end of the world. And according to Malachi, if you honor God’s name (“hallowed be Thy name.”), “justice will shine like the sun, and its rays will bring healing.”

Now let’s turn our attention to our Psalm for today, Psalm 98,.

Responsorial Psalm (**Psalm 98:5-6, 7-8, 9**)

The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.

*The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.*

Make music for Him on harps. Play beautiful melodies! Sound the trumpets and horns and celebrate with joyful songs for our Lord and King!

*The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.*

Command the ocean to roar with all of its creatures, and the earth to shout with all of its people. Order the rivers to clap their hands, and all of the hills to sing together.

*The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.*

Let them worship the Lord! He is coming to judge everyone on the earth, and He will be honest and fair.

*The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.*

So Psalm 98 says that God is “coming to judge everyone on earth,” and people will “Sound the trumpets and horns and celebrate with joyful songs for our Lord and King!”

Next is today’s second reading.

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (**2 Thes 3:7-12**)

Sisters and brothers: You surely know that you should follow our example. We didn’t waste our time loafing, and we didn’t accept food from anyone without paying for it. We didn’t want to be a burden to any of you, so night and day we worked as hard as we could. We had the right not to work, but we wanted

to set an example for you. We also gave you the rule that if you don't work, you don't eat. Now we learn that some of you just loaf around and don't do any work, except the work of a busybody. So for the sake of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we ask and beg these people to settle down and start working for a living. The Word of the Lord.

In the early days of Christianity after Jesus died and ascended into heaven, people believed that the world would be coming to an end real soon. Of course, we don't know that it *won't* end soon, and when the earth might end is a topic discussed during Advent, but we can't just march around with signs saying, "The End is Near" and do nothing in the meantime. But that's what was happening in Paul's time. People thought the end of the world was going to be so soon that they stopped working or doing anything and just sat around waiting for it to happen. That's why Paul said, "some of you just loaf around and don't do any work." But those early Christian communities depended on each other for their various needs. So Paul said, "for the sake of...Jesus Christ...start working for a living."

And now the gospel.

Alleluia, Alleluia. *Alleluia, Alleluia.*

Lift up your heads and see; your redemption is near at hand.

*Alleluia, Alleluia.*

+ A reading from the holy gospel according to St. Luke (**Luke 21:5-19**).

Some people were talking about the beautiful stones used to build the temple and about the gifts that had been placed in it. Jesus said, "Do you see these stones? The time is coming when not one of them will be left in place. They will all be knocked down." Some people asked, "Teacher, when will this

happen? How can we know when these things are about to take place?” Jesus replied, “Don’t be fooled by all those men who will come and claim to be Me. They will say, ‘I am the Christ!’ and ‘Now is the time!’ But don’t follow them. When you hear about wars and riots, don’t be afraid. These things will have to happen first, but that is not the end. “Nations will go to war against one another, and kingdoms will attack each other. There will be great earthquakes, and in many places people will starve to death and suffer terrible diseases. All sorts of frightening things will be seen in the sky. “Before all this happens, you will be arrested and punished. You will be tried in the Jewish meeting places and be put in jail. Because of Me you will be placed on trial before kings and governors. But this will be your chance to tell about your faith. “Don’t worry about what you will say to defend yourselves. I will give you the wisdom to know what to say. None of your enemies will be able to oppose you or to say that you are wrong. “You will be betrayed by your own parents, brothers, family, and friends. Some of you will even be killed. Because of Me you will be hated by everyone. But don’t worry! You will be saved by being faithful to Me.” The gospel of the Lord.

The Temple in Jerusalem was originally built by King Solomon and stood for four hundred and ten years until it was destroyed by the Babylonians. It was then rebuilt about seventy years later and was almost four hundred years old again when Jesus was speaking about it in the beginning of today’s gospel. It was a beautiful building made of white limestone with gold plating and all sorts of courtyards. In today’s gospel Jesus said it would be knocked down. And about thirty or so years later, just as He predicted, the Roman’s tore it down. The people wanted to know when such a terrible thing would happen. Jesus didn’t say when, but he told them of other terrible things that would happen, things like phony Christs, wars and riots, earthquakes, starvation and terrible diseases, awful things in the sky, and still the end wouldn’t happen yet. Furthermore, people will be arrested and punished and some even killed all because of Him. But

then Jesus said, “Because of Me you will be hated by everyone. But don’t worry! You will be saved by being faithful to Me.”

So in today’s readings from the Bible we hear from Malachi and Jesus about all sorts of misery which will happen before and during the end of the world, especially to evil people at the end. We also hear from Malachi and in Psalm 98 that “justice will shine like the sun,” and “The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.” And Malachi and Jesus tell us how wonderful it will be for the good people who “honor [God’s] name” and are “faithful to [Jesus].” Whenever it is that the world comes to an end, Jesus will be there to welcome into God’s kingdom all who were faithful to Him.

And that, girls and boys, is the lesson in today’s readings. Speak with your parents about it.

The Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2022  
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