

St. Barnabas Catholic Church, 33rd Sun. Ord, (Luke 21: 5 – 19) 11/ 17, 2019 Yr C
EVERY SO OFTEN,,, WE'RE CONFRONTED WITH THE
UNCERTAINTY,,, THAT ARISES FROM THE DAWN OF
WHAT SEEMS TO BE,,, ***EVIL DAYS***.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO,,, PEOPLE WONDERED IF THE
FIERCE BATTLES OF WW I - REPRESENTED THE
APOCALYPTIC ARMAGEDDON. **THEN CAME WW II!**

AT THE END OF WW II,,, THE NEWSPAPER HEADLINES
SCREAMED; "**PEACE ON EARTH**". BUT,,, EVEN THAT,,,
WAS SHORT LIVED,,, WITH KOREA AND VIET NAM!

AND IN THIS CENTURY,,, THE EVENTS THAT
OCCURRED ON 9/11,,, SEEMED TO UNLEASH ANOTHER
AGE OF TERRORISM.

TODAYS GOSPEL,,, DEALS WITH A DELICATE SUBJECT
THAT CAN FRIGHTEN SOME PEOPLE,,, OR,,, PERHAPS
EVEN MAKE SOME,,, TRY TO PREDICT WHEN THESE
THINGS WILL OCCUR. IT'S THE KIND OF LESSON,,,
THAT CAN CATCH YOU OFF GUARD,,, BECAUSE IT HAS
A TWO PART APPLICATION.

FIRST; WE HEAR JESUS,,, PROPHESYING,,, ABOUT;
***THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM,,, AND THE GREAT
TEMPLE***.

WE NOW KNOW,,, THAT THIS ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE
IN 70 AD,,, AND WHEN THE ROMAN'S GOT FINISHED,,,
AS SCRIPTURE PROPHESYED;

NOT ONE STONE,,, STOOD UPON ANOTHER.

BUT,,, BECAUSE ALL PROPHESY,,, HAS; AN INITIAL
FULFILLMENT,,, FOLLOWED BY A COMPLETE AND
TOTAL FULFILLMENT,,, WE ALSO HEAR JESUS
TELLING US,,, OF;

***THE END OF TIME EVENTS,,,
THAT WOULD HAPPEN... PRIOR TO HIS RETURN***.

THESE EVENTS,,, CAN BE STARTLING AND AWFULLY
UPSETTING,,, WITH IMAGES OF;

***"NATION AGAINST NATION",,, "EARTHQUAKES",,,
"FAMINES",,, "PESTILENCE",,, "PERSECUTION" AND,,,
"OTHER FEARFUL EVENTS"!***

THIS WEEKS GOSPEL,,, CAN EITHER CREATE,,, **FEAR IN US**,,, OR,,, **PEACE AND HOPE!**

FEAR; ABOUT THE END OF TIME,,, OR;
PEACE AND HOPE; IN BELIEVERS,,, WHO HAVE RECEIVED THE LOVE AND FORGIVENESS OF JESUS INTO THIER HEARTS BY FAITH AND IN THE PROMISE OF JESUS,,, THAT WE WILL BE WITH HIM,,, WHEN HE RETURNS AGAIN.

A FEW YEARS AGO,,, A SMALL CHURCH DECIDED TO TRY,,, TO REGAIN,,, SOME OF THEIR **DROPOUTS!** THEY WENT THROUGH THEIR MEMBERSHIP ROSTER AND PUT TOGETHER A LIST OF NAMES,,, OF THOSE,,, THEY WANTED TO VISIT.

THEY SENT OUT VOLUNTEERS,,, **TWO-BY-TWO**,,, AND INVITED THE MISSING MEMBERS TO RETURN TO CHURCH.

THE VOLUNTEERS SOON DISCOVERED,,, THAT MOST OF THE PEOPLE,,, “**HAD OTHER THINGS TO DO ON SUNDAY MORNINGS**”.

ONE PERSON SAID: I’ COME BACK TO CHURCH,,, IF IT DIDN’T CLASS WITH MY GOLF.

ANOTHER SAID; WE CAME BACK TO CHURCH,,, WHEN OUR KIDS WERE INVOLVED,,, BUT,,, WHEN THEY OUTGREW SUNDAY SCHOOL,,, WE STOPPED.

STILL ANOTHER SAID; I ENJOY GOING TO CHURCH ON CHRISTMAS AND EASTER,,, BUT,,, THE OTHER SERVICES,,, ARE A BIT DULL!

BUT ONE RESPONSE WAS DIFFERENT; TWO OF THE VOLUNTEERS VISITED A MAN THAT NOBODY KNEW. HIS NAME WAS “**LUKE**” AND HE LIVED IN AN OLD HOUSE,,, BEHIND OVERGROWN PINE TREES. WHEN THE VOLUNTEERS KNOCKED ON THE DOOR,,, THE DOOR QUICKLY OPENED AND “**LUKE**”,,, AN OLDER MAN APPEARED,,, SAYING; **WHAT DO YOU WANT?** THE VOLUNTEERS SAID; WE’RE FROM THE CHURCH AND “**LUKE**”,,, WE STOPPED BY,,, TO VISIT YOU!

HE INVITED THEM IN,, AND THEY EXPLAINED WHY THEY HAD COME. “LUKE” REPLIED; *I’LL TELL YOU WHY I DON’T GO TO CHURCH ANYMORE! IT’S BECAUSE I GOT IN THE HABIT OF READING THE SUNDAY PAPER BEFORE I WENT TO MASS.*

PUZZLED,, ONE OF THE VOLUNTEERS ASKED: HOW DID READING THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER,, STOP YOU FROM COMING TO CHURCH?

THE MAN LOOKED AT THE VOLUNTEERS AND SAID; NO,, I READ THE NEWS! *IT’S AN TERRIBLE WORLD OUT THERE. THERE’S DISEASES,, THAT I DON’T UNDERSTAND,, & WARS ARE BREAKING OUT ALL OVER. FAMILIES ARE FALLING APART. THEIR KIDS RUN THE STREETS,, AND THEY’RE CARRYING GUNS TODAY. LISTEN,, THE WORLD’S FALLING APART,, AND THE CHURCH CAN’T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT,, SO,, WHAT’S THE POINT OF GOING?*

ONE OF THE VOLUNTEERS SAID; LUKE,, YOU OUGHT TO COME BACK,, WE HAVE A NICE PRIEST,, TWO WONDERFUL BISHOPS,, AND A GREAT BIBLE STUDY GROUP,, ON TUESDAY NIGHTS.

THE OLD MAN SAID: *I DON’T THINK SO,, I GET OUT,, FROM TIME TO TIME,, TO GET MY GROCERIES,, AND THAT’S ALL I NEED TO TACKLE.*

I WENT TO CHURCH FOR A WHILE,, BUT,, IT DIDN’T DO NO GOOD. THE WORLD GOT WORSE AND PEOPLE GOT NO BETTER. WHEN MY WIFE DIED,, I DECIDED TO JUST SIT HERE,, WATCH EVERYTHING FALL APART AND JUST WAIT FOR MY TURN!

NO,, I DON’T GO TO CHURCH ANYMORE,, BECAUSE,,
THE CHURCH HAS NOTHING TO SAY!

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,, IN THIS DAY AND AGE OF TERRORIST ATTACKS,, WARS,, ECONOMIC FAILINGS AND,, **OUR NOT KNOWING WHAT THE FUTURE MAY BE**,, WE CAN’T JUST SIT BACK AND WAIT FOR THE END OF OUR LIVES,, IN DISPAIR,, LIKE THE OLD MAN.

WE NEED TO TURN TO JESUS,,, WHO SAID;

I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU,,, OR FORSAKE YOU,,, MY PEACE I GIVE YOU,,, NOT AS THE WORLD GIVES. DO NOT LET YOUR HEARTS BE TROUBLED,,, AND DO NOT BE AFRAID! (JN 14: 27)

THE OLD MAN WAS WRONG! GOD'S WORD,,, AND THE CHURCH,,, ***DO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY!*** YOU SEE,,, ***WE'VE READ,,, THE END OF THE BOOK,,, AND WE WIN!***

WE CAN LIVE TODAY,,, IN PEACE,,, WITH HOPE FOR TOMORROW,,, AND WE CAN REST IN THE PROMISE THAT CHRIST ***IS COMING SOON!***

BUT,,, PERHAPS WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO US,,, ISN'T THE END OF THE WORLD,,, AS WE CAN IMAGINE IT,,, WITH THE RETURN OF JESUS,,,

ALTHOUGH HIS RETURN IS DRAWING NEAR!

BUT RATHER,,, THE EFFECT THAT DIFFERENT ENDINGS HAVE ON OUR OWN LIVES,,, LIKE THE TIMES WHEN YOUR WORLD SEEMS TO BE SHAKEN TO IT'S VERY FOUNDATION.

IT MAY BE THAT YOUR WORLD FEELS LIKE IT HAS COLLAPSED,,, PERHAPS YOU'RE SUFFERING AND YOU SEE NO HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. YOU MAY HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE,,, OR A BELOVED PET! YOUR HEART ACHES,,, AND THERE IS A HOLLOWNESS WITHIN YOU.

PERHAPS YOU MIGHT BE INVOLVED IN A MESSY "***BREAK-UP***" OF A RELATIONSHIP IN YOUR LIFE AND WHAT SEEMED LIKE A BRIGHT FUTURE,,, SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED.

HARDLY A WEEK GOES BY,,, WITHOUT SOME NEWS,,, OF JOB LOSSES AND SOME OF YOU HERE TODAY,,, ***MIGHT HAVE EVEN FELT THAT STING AND YOU FEEL,,, THAT YOUR PERSONAL LIFE,,, IS JUST FALLING APART.***

WHENEVER THESE TYPES OF THINGS HAPPEN,,, THEY CAN BE TIMES OF GREAT TESTING AND THESE MAY BE TIMES,,, ***WHERE GOD MAY BE; TESTING OUR FAITH!***

SO,,, WHAT CAN WE DO? SHOULD WE FADE AWAY?
DENY OUR FAITH,,, BECOME AN UNBELIEVER?
OR,,, DO WE LOOK TO THE BIBLE,,, PRAY,,, AND CRY
OUT,,, TO OUR LOVING AND FAITHFUL LORD?

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, (*COR. 10*) TELLS US THAT

WE ARE ASSURED THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD:

*GOD IS FAITHFUL! HE WILL NOT LET YOU BE
TEMPTED BEYOND WHAT YOU'RE ABLE TO BEAR.
BUT,,, WHEN YOU'RE TEMPTED,,, HE WILL PROVIDE A
WAY OUT (GRACE) SO THAT YOU CAN STAND UP,,,
UNDER IT. AGAIN,,, DRAW NEAR TO ME AND I WILL
DRAW NEAR TO YOU,,, SAYS THE LORD!*

IN THE GOSPEL,,, JESUS WAS TALKING ABOUT: THE
SHAKING AND JUDGEMENT OF THE WORLD,,, FOR IT'S
REFUSING GOD'S GRACE AND LOVE,,, BUT HE ALSO
GAVE HIS DISCIPLES HOPE,,, AT THE END OF THE
PASSAGE.

JESUS NOT ONLY TOLD THE PEOPLE TO STAND FIRM,,,
IN THIER FAITH,,, BUT TO GIVE TESTIMONY,,, AND
WITNESS OF GOD'S GRACE AND LOVE,,, **WITH THE**
PROMISE,,, THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WOULD GIVE THEM
WISDOM AND THE WORDS TO SAY,,, THAT WILL LEAD TO
LIFE ETERNAL BECAUSE OF THEIR PERSEVERENCE.

IT SHOULD BE OUR DESIRE TODAY,,,
THAT **WE BE A LIVING WITNESS,,, OF GOD'S GRACE**
AND LOVE TO THIS DARK AND LONELY WORLD!

AS FOR THE ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT OF JESUS'
PROPHECY,,, AND HIS SOON RETURN,,,
THE WORDS THAT JESUS SPOKE,,, 2000 YEARS AGO,,,
APPLY AS MUCH TO US TODAY,,, AS THEY TO THE
EARLY CHURCH.

THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH,,, IN THE WORLD
TODAY,,, ALONG WITH THE PRESENT WORLD WIDE
ECONOMIC AND DOMESTIC CHAOS,,, SHOULD SEND A
WAKE UP CALL TO THE CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN'S,,,
AROUND THE WORLD.

THEY NEED TO OPEN UP THEIR HEARTS,,, TO THE LOVE AND GRACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND TO SEEK HIS STRENGTH AND WISDOM,,, FOR THEIR LIVES,,, KNOWING; **AS THE BOOK OF REVELATIONS SAYS;**

THE KINGDOM OF THE WORLD,,, HAS BECOME THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD,,, AND OF HIS CHRIST,,, AND HE WILL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, OUR HEARTS CAN REST IN THAT BLESSED PEACE AND HOPE!

THIS IS A TIME,,, THAT WE AS CATHOLICS,,, SHOULD REGAIN A SENSE OF HUMBLE PRIDE,,, IN THE FAITH THAT WE PROFESS,,, AS WE SEE THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS,,, AND HEAR ABOUT THE WITNESS OF THEIR LIVES,,, AND COME TO REALIZE THE DEPTH OF THE TRIALS AND SUFFERING THEY ENDURED,,, WHILE ALWAYS REMAINING FAITHFUL!

THEY GIVE US WONDERFUL EXAMPLES OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IN THEIR LIVES,,, SO IN TURN,,, WE CAN BE A LIVING WITNESS,,, TO WHAT JESUS CAN DO IN OUR LIVES!

JESUS,,, THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH,,, HAS NEVER ABANDONED HIS CHILDREN,,, AND HE WILL NOT ABANDON YOU!

IN THE MIDST OF THE TURMOIL IN YOUR LIFE,,, JESUS,,, WHO HAS JUST BEEN WITH YOU ALL ALONG,,, IS STILL DWELLING,,, IN YOUR HEARTS!

I ENCOURAGE YOU MY BELOVED,,, SPEND SOME TIME EVERY DAY,,, WITH JESUS,,, IN QUIETNESS & PRAYER. STOP,,, FOR A MOMENT AND TAKE JUST A MOMENT,,, TO BOW YOUR HEADS AND ASK JESUS,,, FOR HIS LOVE AND HIS PEACE! AS YOU DO THIS,,, YOU'LL KNOW THAT HE IS GOD,,, AND YOU'LL FEEL,,, THE FULLNESS OF HIS PRESENCE!

DURING THE TIMES,,, WHEN YOU FEEL,,, THAT YOUR FAITH IS BEING TESTED,,, (*AND YOU WILL BE TESTED*) AND WHEN YOU FEEL THAT YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN CRUSHED,,, THOSE ARE THE TIMES,,,

**WHEN JESUS IS THE CLOSEST TO YOU,,, REGARDLESS
OF WHAT YOUR FEELINGS OR EMOTIONS MIGHT BE
TELLING YOU.**

**SO,,, STAND FIRM,,, IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,,,
BECAUSE GOD,,, IN JESUS CHRIST,,, IS ALWAYS WITH
YOU,,, AND REMEMBER,,, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,,
HE DOES HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU!**

I AM HE,,, AND I TRULY DO LOVE YOU!

+++AMEN+++

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