

Wednesday November 13 for the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Opening prayer: *God of creation and history, you created all things to be fulfilled and brought to completion at the end of time. Make our hearts ready to greet you in glory in the fullness of time. Let your coming in glory be a time of rejoicing for each of us. Break open the meaning of your Holy Word as we share it together this day. This we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

- *In the words of Saint Benedict, "Listen with the ears of your heart."*
- *Please note a word, phrase, or verse that seemed to really catch your notice.*
- *A volunteer slowly read aloud today's passage Afterwards, we have a few minutes of silent reflection.*

Reading of the Assigned Gospel According to Mk 13:24-32

The Coming of the Son of Man.

24 Jesus said to his disciples "In those days after that tribulation the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,

25 and the stars will be falling from the sky,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

26 * And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory,

27 and then he will send out the angels and gather [his] elect from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree.

28 "Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near.

29 In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates.

30 Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.

31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 “But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

(Not included in the Gospel reading, but nice to read since it’s the end of the chapter)

33 Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come.

34 It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch.

35 Watch, therefore; you do not know when the lord of the house is coming, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

36 May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping.

37 What I say to you, I say to all: ‘Watch!’”

FOOTNOTES:

* [13:3–37] Jesus’ prediction of the destruction of the temple (Mk 13:2) provoked questions that the four named disciples put to him in private regarding the time and the sign when all these things are about to come to an end (Mk 13:3–4). The response to their questions was Jesus’ eschatological discourse prior to his imminent death. It contained instruction and consolation exhorting the disciples and the church to faith and obedience through the trials that would confront them (Mk 13:5–13). The sign is the

presence of the desolating abomination (Mk 13:14; see Dn 9:27), i.e., of the Roman power profaning the temple. Flight from Jerusalem is urged rather than defense of the city through misguided messianic hope (Mk 13:14–23). Intervention will occur only after destruction (Mk 13:24–27), which will happen before the end of the first Christian generation (Mk 13:28–31). No one but the Father knows the precise time, or that of the parousia (Mk 13:32); hence the necessity of constant vigilance (Mk 13:33–37). Luke sets the parousia at a later date, after “the time of the Gentiles” (Lk 21:24). See also notes on Mt 24:1–25:46.

* [13:26] Son of Man...with great power and glory: Jesus cites this text from Dn 7:13 in his response to the high priest, Are you the Messiah? (Mk 14:61). In Ex 34:5; Lv 16:2; and Nm 11:25 the clouds indicate the presence of the divinity. Thus in his role of Son of Man, Jesus is a heavenly being who will come in power and glory.

Commentary

Chapter 13 of Mark is not easy reading. In the Bible, it is an example of a literary genre called Apocalyptic (“hidden”) writing. This type of writing is not only obscure but it is difficult to interpret. It is meant to give hope to faith communities who are oppressed and to be a warning to those who oppress them. Apocalyptic literature is known for visions, allegories and complicated symbols. It looks ahead to the time when God will triumph over the powers of darkness. Mark has five different strands of thought: prophecies about the destruction of Jerusalem (vv 1-2,14-20); warnings about persecutions to come (vv 9-13); warnings about the dangers of the last days (vv 36,21-22); warnings about the second coming of Christ, also referred to as the Day of the Lord (vv 7-8,24-27); and the importance of vigilance (vv 28-37).

Mark, using typical apocalyptic symbols (darkened sun, unlit moon, falling stars), seeks to give hope to his persecuted community by referring to the triumphal return of the gloriously risen Christ who will soon put an end to their struggle. Obviously, Mark believes Jesus’ Second Coming will happen during his lifetime. Jesus uses the image of the fig tree to further assure his readers

of the imminence of the Parousia (his Second Coming). Just as we know that summer is coming when the fig tree begins to blossom, so are the disciples to recognize the coming of the Son of Man when a period of affliction and cosmic signs occur. Then Jesus appears to contradict his earlier assertion about the imminence of the Parousia when he says: "As to the day and hour, no one knows... except the Father." This saying of Jesus is a warning to future generations not to get into the business of predicting the time of his return. Instead, we should busy ourselves with leading good and just lives, always ready for the Lord's return which will come like a thief in the night.

FAITH-SHARING QUESTIONS

1. Daniel and Mark are writing for communities undergoing great distress in their lives. Who are the communities in our world undergoing persecution? What do you think motivates people to persecute people of faith? What causes religious bigotry?
2. We all have stress in our lives. What are some good and not so good (drinking, eating) ways we can deal with stress?
3. If you could ask God one question about the next life, what would that question be?
4. What inscription would you like to have written on your tombstone?
5. Name one thing today's Gospel says to us that we disciples of Jesus need to heed/act on.

IS THERE A CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE THIS WEEK?

IS THERE A PRAYER REQUEST YOU HAVE?

CLOSING PRAYER - The Lord's Prayer

Pray for all who are dying at this time and for Christians who have been persecuted for their faith.

Topic: Blessed Sacrament's Zoom Meeting

Date/Time: Nov 13, 2024 06:30 PM-7:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Blessed Sacrament is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85136740699?pwd=Q2pXLzdzZFdNNU1NajVpeEtKU0hJQT09>

Meeting ID: 811 6265 5618

Passcode: 280607