

Homily for Thirty-third Sunday of the Year – B



Fr Michael says:

My Words will remain

We approach the end of the Church's Year and our thoughts turn towards the end of time and our ultimate destiny. Daniel gives us his vision and it is remarkable in the fact that it has the first explicit reference to the Resurrection from the dead and the term "everlasting life". The letter to the Hebrews puts before us the contrast between the Hebrew sacrifices with that of Jesus, with the superiority of the latter being clearly affirmed. Mark's vision is influenced by present realities, the persecution of the early Church and his insistence that the end was nigh! God alone knows when it will happen, so there is no point in speculating, but be on constant guard. The Lord will come to claim His own. All of us have faith in Jesus' ultimate victory, but the end of time will be our meeting with the Son of Man, when we die."Heaven and earth will pass away, but my Word will not pass away."

We can become over familiar with the stories in the Gospel and we need to find new and varied meanings of ensuring that we see things in different perspectives and so retain their freshness. We need to be drawn into the stories and the events and hear our own stories in what is being told again. So it is not enough for us to turn to the Bible in times of challenge or just to hold the Bible in veneration, because of what it is – we need to read the words against the background of who we are and the story of our lives. As Mark Twain has said: "Others worry are bothered about the parts of the Bible they cannot understand. I'm bothered by the parts that I can understand!" Our constant reading and studying of the Bible will allow us to ask the question when we are perplexed: "What does the Bible say about this matter?" The answer which should come from the very depths of our being should be – you must do what is best and right. In this way the Bible can inspire us to greater generosity, give us strength in weakness and correct us if we do things which are wrong. In other words we need to LIVE the Gospel. It is our handbook, so often human wisdom is rooted in shallowness and first impressions or feelings, which can change so quickly – the Word of Jesus will not do so, we need to build on house on the rock which is the Bible and not the sands of human whims and fancies.

Pray often these words from Psalm 15: "Preserve me God, I take refuge in you. My happiness lies in you alone – you are my portion and cup, you yourself are my prize. I keep you ever in my sight, even at night your direct my heart. With you at my right hand, I shall stand firm. So my heart rejoices, my soul is glad – for you will not leave your beloved to know decay. You will show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence, at your right hand happiness forever."