



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 13th November 2016 - The Thirty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for 13th November 2016 (Luke 21:5-19): Perseverance

When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, Jesus said, "All these things you are staring at now - the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another: everything will be destroyed." And they put to him this question: "Master," they said, "when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?" "Take care not to be deceived," he said, "because many will come using my name and saying, 'I am he' and 'The time is near at hand'. Refuse to join them. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon." Then he said to them, "Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. But before all this happens, men will seize you and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to imprisonment, and bring you before kings and governors because of my name - and that will be your opportunity to bear witness. Keep this carefully in mind: you are not to prepare your defence, because I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. You will be hated by all men on account of my name, but not a hair of your head will be lost. Your endurance will win you your lives."



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

Luke was writing his gospel after the devastation of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in 70 AD, and the way he frames the words of Jesus suggests that he had witnessed the devastation. Massive blocks of stone, thrown down from the walls, are still lying there as they fell, scattered at the base of the Temple. The message of this passage is, then, the same as Paul's in today's second reading: the end is sure, but is not yet. Jesus prepares his followers for what is to come before the cataclysmic finale. He warns against false Messiahs, political leaders or other saviour-figures who claim to 'put the world to rights'. His followers will be continually challenged to give an account of their beliefs, harassed and martyred in every age, betrayed by those they thought their friends. There is a promise that Jesus will provide the words and wisdom for Christians to make a reply to their persecutors; there is a promise too of protection from real harm - but there is no promise that it will be a quiet and easy life. A constant theme in Luke's Good News is that the followers of Jesus must follow him in his difficulties and trials. Only with like endurance will they stay true to him and keep in his footsteps.

Reflection: Recall an occasion when the Lord gave you wisdom beyond your own.

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 13th November 2016



First Reading: *Burning like an Oven*

Malachi 3:19-20

The day is coming now, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and the evil-doers will be like stubble. The day that is coming is going to burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, leaving them neither root nor stalk. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will shine out with healing in its rays.

Each year the Church takes the opportunity at the end of the liturgical season to remind us that the Day of the Lord is coming. This 'Day of the Lord' has several different meanings, depending on context. In the Old Testament it was the great and terrible day, pictured in ever more catastrophic cosmic images, when the Lord would come to set right all injustice. In today's world this would be some upheaval! Rags to riches, riches to rags, slumdog millionaires, emperors wearing no clothes! Then Jesus came, declaring that the Kingdom was at hand, that the Day was dawning. And so it did - at the Hour of Jesus, completed on the first Easter Sunday, when the world and life were changed for ever. Yet in another sense, at another level, the Day is still to come. Christians are different from every other people, in that we live in expectation, in the knowledge that at some time everything will be brought to completion. The sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. Christ will hand over the Kingdom to his Father, having put all things under his feet, even the last enemy, death. This is the end to which we believe all history is pointing.

What do you understand by 'The Day of the Lord'?

Second Reading: *Keep Busy*

2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

You know how you are supposed to imitate us: now we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we ever have our meals at anyone's table without paying for them; no, we worked night and day, slaving and straining, so as not to be a burden on any of you. This was not because we had no right to be, but in order to make ourselves an example for you to follow. We gave you a rule when we were with you: not to let anyone have any food if he refused to do any work. Now we hear that there are some of you who are living in idleness, doing no work themselves but interfering with everyone else's. In the Lord Jesus Christ, we order and call on people of this kind to go on quietly working and earning the food that they eat.

“ We don't get any nearer perfection...
simply by sitting and waiting. ”

In his earlier letter to the Thessalonians Paul had warned them that the Day would come 'like a thief in the night', like an unexpected trap suddenly sprung. The recipients of the letter seem to have been so panicked that some simply downed tools and sat waiting. So now Paul chides them that anyone who does not work should not eat either. The charge of 'idleness' is not to be understood only on a literal level but on a symbolic level too. Paul himself not only worked to earn his bread and butter by his leather-working but also worked to set the fire of the Gospel alight all around the eastern Mediterranean. In all his writings he is acutely aware of the pressure from the end-point, from that Day of the Lord, although he has no idea when it will come. We don't get any nearer perfection, or any nearer the state in which we would like the Lord to find us, simply by sitting and waiting. Even those who are chair-bound, and can indeed only sit and wait, are able at the same time mightily to advance the Kingdom by bringing the light and joy of Christ to their surroundings.

What should we do to prepare for 'The Day of the Lord'?

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*
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