

Homily 33rd Sunday Year C 2022

It is hard to read the scripture passages this Sunday without thinking that we are coming to the end of the world. Wars continue, terrible fires, drought and famine are rife. In places the sea is invading the land and destroying dwellings at an alarming rate. The whole eco system on which we depend is slowly eroding. It won't be God who will destroy the world, we are doing a much better job???

Because we read scripture far too literally its message and wisdom are generally missed. The Old Testament speaks of the *fear* of God; the writers understood this to be a "*reverential wonder*." Much of the wisdom was personified the enemy being alien nations but the writers knew that the real enemies are those that we harbour within. Enemies that can only be overcome with God's help, which is what God wants to do to set us free, testified by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Ronald Rolheiser gives a very good example of our inner demons when he writes:

Anyone who has gone through a 12 - step addiction program knows what it means to have to kill the whole enemy. To move into the promised land of sobriety and remain there, something hard and cruel needs to happen that can't happen through half-measures: To move into the promised land of sobriety, you have to clean out ("kill") your entire liquor cabinet, all the enemies: the beer, scotch, bourbon, rum, vodka, wine, cognac, and brandy, every ounce of alcohol has to go. If you allow yourself even one drink you will lose your sobriety.

But God has given us life to be lived to the full and we do this through the caring support and help we show one another and through personal sacrifice. We do this with a willingness to go the extra mile so that no one is left behind. In this way we help create a more hope-filled future. Rather than ponder on the end of the world, Larry Gillick sj encourages us to ponder. *What is worth living for and worth dying for? How precious is everything that we give every day. We may not shed our blood for a cause or a person, but that same blood gives us a life worth living for and that is an every-day offering. A good life is more than good when it is given to the living of others. Each day is a "thank You" for what we can share.*

At the moment the planet lies in the hands of the nations across the world meeting for Cop27. We are aware of the power of the sun to destroy and burn, cause drought and starvation but the love of God is as much more powerful, more healing and more awesome while also being as protective as the care of a nursing mother. Thanks be to God!

Thanks to a very healthy lifestyle, a married couple live well into their 100s

One day they are both killed in a tragic accident, and go to heaven.

On the first morning, they ask God and where is the gym. "Gym?" God replies, "you don't need to go to the gym here, you'll always be in perfect shape even if you never exercise." The wife says how nice that is, but the husband looks a little bit annoyed. In the afternoon, they go back to God and ask where they can get high factor sunscreen. "This is heaven, you don't need it anymore, the sun can't burn you or give you cancer, enjoy the beaches."

The wife is satisfied, but the husband starts looking genuinely angry. Later in the evening, they go to God and ask where they can find a health food restaurant for dinner. "We don't have health food restaurants, you can eat as much as you want of whatever you want and never feel bloated or gain any weight."

Finally, the husband snaps, and yells at his wife "You see?! You see?! If it wasn't for your blooming bran muffins, I could've been here forty years ago!"