

33rd Ordinary Sunday
November 14, 2021
“Vigilant and Prepared”

Dan 12:1-3
Heb 10:11...18
Mk 13:24-32

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

As human beings, we are interesting creatures. Normally, we go about life in a fairly routine way. We do the things that should and must be done, especially the really important things. But some things we let slide –

We are especially prone to putting off or avoiding unpleasant things. These are things that take a great amount of emotional or psychological energy. They can be things that are distasteful – Things that affect our relationship with others – Things – which done – will change the way we live now, and in the future as well.

Change can be hard – very hard. Sometimes, it might even seem to be impossible. Nevertheless, the best way I know to accomplish whatever needs to be done is through prayer. We need to turn whatever is facing us over to God – and we must seek guidance and direction from Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

The scriptures for today present us with an incentive to change in a definitive way. They urge us to be prepared and ready for the End Times. People have predicted these times again and again over the centuries – and they have always been wrong – For, our planet still exists and the human race has not become extinct.

However, there will be an end time for each of us individually. There will be a day and a moment when our life here will end. It will be the instant of our death. And at that moment, we will encounter God and face a personal judgment. It will be too late to make changes – Too late to do what we have left undone – It will be too late to reverse the pattern of sin that we always knew had to be rejected and eliminated.

The prophet Daniel doesn't mince words about the destiny that awaits each of us after our time here. Those who were faithful to God and to God's Commandments will live forever in His presence. But those who did not – those who died estranged from God – will live in everlasting horror and disgrace!

What is so painful to realize as we mature, is that the mistakes we made and sins we committed earlier are so difficult to correct and change today. Perhaps, it is in our relationships – Perhaps, it is in our personal behavior alone or with others – Perhaps, it is in the way we deal with our personal health and well-being – Perhaps, it is in the way that we negatively impact our environment.

I suspect that every one of us has something we wish never happened and continues to keep us from God in some way. What is important is that we discover and admit to what we have done. We can't continue to whitewash it. We can't pretend that it doesn't displease God – or that it doesn't square with the Gospel.

It is possible that some of us don't worry about the failings in our lives and the changes we must make – because we trust in the mercy of God and the redeeming love of Jesus. But is this the way to live the life of love that our relationship with God must be? Can we say we are disciples of Jesus if we don't try – and try again – to be all that we should be?

Nevertheless, no matter where we find ourselves, we must never get overly discouraged and give up. We must never fail to trust in the grace of God and the mercy of God. One day, the great Saint Bernard decided that he would be perfect from that moment on. Of course, he failed to be perfect. We are told that every day, for the rest of his life, he had to say: “Bernard, today, you will begin to be perfect!”

Brothers and Sisters, God created us for eternal love and joy and bliss. But our life here is always a struggle. It is a proving ground. Jesus came to lead us through the hardships and pitfalls that life necessarily entails. He is always present to us. God is always present to us with His grace.

So, let us pray for vigilance –

Let us pray for fidelity –

And with God's help, may we not put off until tomorrow what must be done today!

Amen.

November 14, 2021

Msgr. Russell G. Terra