

**Thirty-Three Sunday in Ordinary Time -B 2018**  
**Daniel 12.1-3///Heb.10.11-14,18///Mark 13.24-32**

→in a few weeks we will be gearing up to celebrate Christmas...it's hard to believe that another holiday season is upon us///

→for many of us it is easy to imagine what things must have been like at the birth of Jesus...we have some enchanting accounts to help us out...a very bright star, angels singing in the heavens, gentle kings coming to see the infant...shepherds on the hillside....

→it makes for a very peaceful, serene and quiet entrance into the world...

→very different than what we hear described in our gospel today about the next coming of Jesus...when

"...the sun will be darkened"

"...the moon will not shed its light"

"...stars will fall out of the skies"

"...the heavenly hosts will be shaken"

" we are told....WHEN YOU SEE THESE THINGS HAPPENING, YOU WILL KNOW THAT THE END IS NEAR"

→it is quite a contrast from Jesus' first entrance into our world...

PAUSE

→this time of year....both in the Church and world...our focus is on endings...

→outside...the fall season is rapidly coming to an end...the leaves are all but gone...the plants are beginning their winter sleep...daylight is short and warm temperatures are now rare...

→[and] inside...here in Church...we also are focused on endings...the church year ends next week...this is a time to remember those whose life here has ended on earth and today our gospel reading focuses on the end of time....as Jesus draws a picture of how the end of the world is going to happen....

→and so...the obvious question becomes...how do we respond to this in-between time we are now in...how are we to prepare for the end....whether it be our own life here on earth or the eventual end of the world.

→the truth is...that all of us know that things eventually will come to an end here on earth  
→and sometimes that awareness makes us uneasy and sometimes it gives us a sense of comfort and hope

PAUSE

→we all know that our bodies will eventually wear out...our health will fail...our life will end...and we can try everything to forestall this...but we know we cannot prevent it entirely

→all the treadmill time in the gym and bran cereal for breakfast will not make us immortal...

→yet at the same time...this awareness that things end also brings us comfort and hope...if we are suffering from the flu, it helps to know that those aches and pains will not last forever

→if we are struggling in school, at work, or at home...it's good to know that things can quickly change for the better

→it even helps to know that being strapped in one of those car-seats in the back seat or if you are the one doing the strapping....that this too will someday come to an end as well.

→but what are we to do in the meantime...in this "in-between time..."

→that remains our challenge as people of faith...as believers of the gospel and as those who continue to hope for eternal life...

→this “in-between” time is an opportunity for us to focus our priorities....to work on getting those things that cause us pain or distress...in order and under control

→things like our anger, or frustration...our resentment and irritations

→...we live in a very nervous and anxious world these days

...threatened by violence and danger from all aspects of life

→the more we strive for harmony...the more it seems to slip away from us

→and yet harmony and happiness is what we desire

→and so, this “in-between” time...provides us with some opportunities to rid ourselves of those things that prevent us from harmony and happiness

→...things like our anger ...our anger towards others...and towards ourselves...

→this “in-between” time gives us the advantage to make an effort to see that our anger gets resolved between us and others

→this “in-between” time...also gives us an opportunity to settle our debt with others....

---I don't mean, things, like house payments, loans, or bills...but rather more personal things

---we all live in a very crowded world and in the course of life, greed and lust and selfishness and other such things tempt and influence us

They make life unfair and unbalanced...and as a result we end up owing others... an apology, a compliment, a kind word, our honesty, integrity, and our truthfulness...

and finally this “in-between” time...can challenge our true belief in God and his goodness and mercy.

→there are all kinds of people today who are living life these days w/out the least bit of faith in God.....

→our faith [you know] is very fragile and delicate these days...it can fluctuate at a moment's notice

→we live in a world full of doubt and mistrust, suspicion and skepticism .....and FAITH, true authentic FAITH, is hard to come by....and it is equally hard to live these days

→and so, if our belief in God is real-----if we are truly living a life of FAITH....then our words and actions, our thoughts and deeds **should truly make a difference**

→they should be modeled on Christ and his life rather than being empty and meaningless, selfish and at times petty

PAUSE

→so here we are... “in-between”....this “in between” time when a child entered the world under a single star on a quiet peaceful night and when the

“...the sun will be darkened and the stars will fall out of the skies”

→one day the world is going end...

→one day our individual lives will end...

→one day evil will crumble and good will prevail....

→[and] one day hopefully all of this will make sense and we will be able to look back with joy and gratitude...

→are we there just yet...perhaps not....but soon we will be...

→in this “in-between” time we just need to be patient...and get our priorities in line  
...knowing full well that for the time being...we **are** the lucky passengers...safely strapped in the  
back seat.