

**33<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME; Cycle – C; Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> 2022**  
**Malachi 3: 19-20; 2 Thessalonians 3: 7-12; Luke 21: 5-19**

Dear Sisters & Brothers

In Luke's gospel chapters 17 and 21 remain hard to understand due to their apocalyptic language and eschatological predictions. The Scripture scholars don't have a unanimous and certain interpretation of these chapters. In these chapters Jesus seemingly speaks about the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple and also the end of time which is the destruction of the world. Chapter 21, part of which we have heard is the continuation of chapter 17. The first part of chapter 21 is clearly the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem Temple. But it is followed immediately by the prediction of the end of the time which indicates the second coming of the Lord for judgement. The belief in the Second Coming of the Lord at the end of the world was very prevalent among the early Christians. This concept developed not only from the Prophetic writings but also from the apocalyptic teachings of Jesus on the end of the world. The Jews too believed that there would come *a day of the Lord* which would mark the destruction of the cosmic order. They believed that the present age is too bad to be cured; but a golden age is in waiting. **But in between the two there would be the day of the Lord which would be terrible time of cosmic upheaval and destruction.** The Jews believed that the Lord would come down with vengeance against the enemies and do justice to his people.

In today's first reading Prophet Malachi predicts such an appearance of the Lord in the Temple for Judgement. He says in chapter 3, "**For, the day is coming blazing like an oven.**" In the same chapter he writes, "**But who will endure the day of his coming.**" The similar view is expressed by Prophets like Isaiah and Joel. "**Lo, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and burning anger; to lay waste the land and destroy the sinners within it.**" (Isaiah 13:9). In the gospel of Luke in chapters 17 and 21 we find clear references to such situations taking place which are the signs of the **end of the world** and the coming of the Lord. The apostles and early Christians believed in the Second Coming of Jesus. From the very beginning the Christians proclaimed the **mystery of faith as, Christ has died; Christ is risen and Christ will come again.** The first century Christians believed that the Second Coming of the Lord would mark the end of the world and it would happen during their life time. St. Paul the apostle too thought that the Coming of the Lord was imminent and which would happen during his life time. Paul says in **1 Thess. 5:2**, "**The day of the Lord will come like a thief in**

**the night.”** In today’s gospel Jesus predicts the end of time through apocalyptic language.

As Jesus predicted, the destruction of Jerusalem Temple took place in 70 AD by the Romans and followed by that more than 1million Jews were killed and 97,000 were taken as captives. But that never brought the end of the world. *And, the idea of the Second Coming of the Lord was rekindled among the Christians during the persecution.* Once Christians got freedom of worship and Christianity became the official religion of Rome, the Second Coming of the Lord never bothered them. **But the Church never deviated from her original teaching that one day our Lord Jesus will come again at the end of the world to judge the living and the dead.** This same truth we profess in our creed too. Whenever some unusual things like wars, natural calamities and pestilences occurred, many thought and spread the news that the Second Coming of the Lord was imminent, marking the end of the world. Even in the modern age people are very curious to know as when will be the end of the world. Many thought that something unusual would happen at the dawn of the year 2000; but things remained normal.

At the same time Jesus absolutely refuses to say when the end of the time will come. All he tells us is that we can expect some mighty signs as the end approaches. **Jesus’ point is that his true followers should not be concerned about the end of the world rather they should be prepared for their own end of the journey in the world.** We know that any day can be our last day and we don’t know when and how it can happen; so we should be prepared. That is why in Luke 12:35-36 Jesus warns us, **“Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their mater’s return from a wedding, ready to open immediately.”** Very often people live in the world as if they are going to live here forever. When somebody meets with an untimely death we may think that it is his/her time and not mine. Every day if we can settle our account with God and remain prepared by doing good deeds, when our final day comes, we won’t be in panic. Please remember, death is not concerned about our young age or old age. For God