

THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
Year B: Dan 12:1-3; Ps 16; Heb 10:11-14, 18; Mk 13:24-32  
November 14, 2021  
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As we near the end of the liturgical year in the Church, we hear in the Gospel Our Lord's description of the end of the world. It's one of the things that Jesus revealed to us – that the created world as we know it will come to an end someday. And it's a good example of the kind of thing that we believe, because we trust Christ who revealed it to us. He said the Son of Man will come in the clouds with great power and glory, surrounded by angels. As Christ said, no one knows when this will happen, but we know it *will* happen, because Christ said it will happen.

For twenty centuries, Christians have lived wondering if the end of the world might come during their lifetime. But here we are, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, still wondering when it will happen. Sometimes we have to remind ourselves that the world, as we know it, *will* come to an end. This world, this life, is so familiar to us, we can start to think that it will always be here and it will always be the same. And for those who *do* believe what Christ said, that He will return in glory, it might be frustrating not to know *when* it will happen.

But knowing that it will happen should prompt us to live in such a way that we will be ready to meet Christ when He comes. We should live in such a way that we would not be embarrassed or ashamed of anything the Lord might find us doing when He comes. And as we wait for His return in glory, we should spend some time imagining what it will be like. There's a beautiful contemporary Christian song about meeting Christ. It's called, "I Can Only Imagine," and it helps to consider the reaction we might have when we finally meet Jesus. The lyrics are:

*I can only imagine, what it will be like, when I walk by your side.  
I can only imagine, what my eyes will see, when your face is before me.  
Surrounded by your glory, what will my heart feel?  
Will I dance for you Jesus, or in awe of you be still?  
Will I stand in your presence, or to me knees will I fall?  
Will I sing Alleluia? Will I be able to speak at all?  
I can only imagine. (MercyMe)*

If you're not familiar with this song, I encourage you to find it and listen to it. It helps to imagine the emotions we might feel when we meet Christ.

As we wait to meet Him, one way we can try to get ready is to consider what we might feel is unfinished or incomplete about our lives when He comes. Remember, the glorious return of Christ will coincide with the end of this created world as we know it, which means time will come to an end. There will be no more time, and each of us will give an account of our lives to Christ. Hopefully, we are not afraid of this, but even eager to meet Him and tell Him about our life. But, even if we are not afraid to meet Christ, we might be afraid of running out of time. So, when we think about the end of the world and the return of Christ, we should ask ourselves, "What will make us say, *'I wish I had more time'?*" What will we wish we had more time to finish?

For example, are there any people, family or friends, whom we will wish we had contacted more often, or been reconciled with? Is there anyone to whom we will wish we had said, "Thank you"? Is there anyone to whom we will wish we had said, "I'm sorry"? Are there any people we know or see in need whom we will wish we had helped? Are there any sins from our past that we will wish we had voiced and included in a good confession? Are there any good books on the faith that we will wish we had read? Will we wish we had developed a greater spiritual discipline of prayer? Will we wish we had developed a greater virtue of speaking well of others? After all, Jesus said, "*I tell you, on the day of judgment people will render an account for every careless word they speak. By your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned*" (Mt 12:36-37). He also said, "*There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known*" (Lk 12:2).

Thinking about what it will be like to meet Christ, and why we might wish we had more time to prepare for His return, is a helpful way to land on some good resolutions for the time we have left. As we near the end of the year, and the days get shorter, and the skies become gray, and the leaves begin to fall, even nature itself reminds us that "*the world in its present form is passing away*" (1Cor 7:31). Our faith tells us that Christ will come again. So, the question for each of us is, "What do we still need to do to get ready to meet Him?"