

Finding Hope **IN THE END TIMES**

Fr. Jereme Asunto, SJ

As we near the end of the liturgical year, the Gospel turns our attention to themes that are often unsettling: destruction, suffering, persecution, and the end times. In our Gospel today, Jesus speaks of wars, earthquakes, plagues, and persecution. These images stir in us anxiety and fear. But once we have overcome our fear, a beautiful teaching on courage and hope awaits us.

Particularly in moments of “endings,” Jesus assures us that he is present. In the face of turmoil, Jesus tells his disciples not to be deceived and not to be terrified. He reminds us that our faith is not grounded on worldly security. Rather, it is grounded on a relationship with the God who never abandons his people. “Not a hair on your head will be destroyed,” he promises. Even in chaos, the Lord continues to work for our good.

The Gospel also reminds us that endings are part of life. The world as we know it will not last forever. We all experience deaths before the ultimate end: defeats, disease, rejections, break-ups, loss of meaning, the non-realization of our long-held dreams.

But the Lord continues to make miracles even in these down moments by turning these into moments of learnings, new

meaning, new direction, of new life. Especially for those who suffered because they chose integrity over corruption, hope over despair, life over destruction, God surely turns their disappointments and loneliness into fertile grounds to build his Kingdom.

He himself is the wounded healer. How many times did he turn the negatives in our life as turning points of victory and newness? In sunshine, God manifests in blessings. In storms of life, God gives us lessons to make us stronger and build us up.

This is what reading the signs of the times mean. It is about trusting in God who best reads the signs of our life. God knows where to bring us both in light and challenging moments. How many times have humans failed because they thought that only they can read the signs?

If we give our everything to God, including the interpretation of the signs, we are only left with trusting him. This is the

outlook of a real disciple. This outlook changes the way we live. Instead of being overwhelmed by fear, we are called to live with purpose and mission. Jesus tells his followers that persecution and trials will give them the chance to testify. In other words, difficult moments are not dead ends. Instead, they open us to opportunities to witness for God’s truth, justice, and love, especially in a world filled with divisions and superficial relationships and faith. Our faithfulness becomes a loud yet quite witnessing amidst a corrupt world.

Should we still fear the end? No. For those who gave their lives to God, there is nothing to anticipate but the fulfillment of what they believed in Christ the Lord, the eternal One.



THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Jer 29:11,12, 14)

(Recited where there is no opening song)

The LORD said: I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction. You will call upon me, and I will answer you, and I will lead back your captives from every place.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here)

P—Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(The priest may address the assembly using these or other similar words)

P—As the liturgical season draws to a close, the readings deal with the last things: death, judgment, reward, and punishment. Jesus in the Gospel speaks of the end of the temple of Jerusalem which points to yet another end: the end of the present reality which will be transformed with the Lord's Second Coming.

Today we celebrate the **World Day of the Poor**. The Church teaches that God has a special love for the poor and the marginalized, viewing them particularly close to God's heart. We are thus invited to have a "preferential option for the poor."

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

(Pause)

P—Have mercy on us, O Lord.

All—For we have sinned against you.

P—Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

All—And grant us your salvation.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

All—Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you, for it is full and lasting happiness to serve with constancy the author of all that is good.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Mal 3:19–20a) (Sit)

The Old Testament closes with the oracles of the prophet Malachi who speaks about the coming of the Lord. It sets the tone for Jesus' second coming on the last day.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Malachi

LO, THE DAY is coming, blazing like an oven, when all the proud and all evildoers will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire, leaving them neither root nor branch, says the LORD of hosts. But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays.

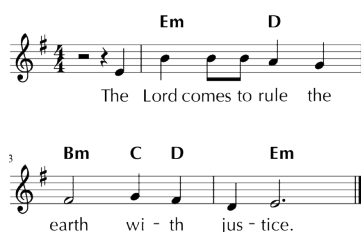
—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 98)

R—The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice.

P. Octobre, ssp



1. Sing praise to the LORD with the harp,/ with the harp and melodious song./ With trumpets and the sound of the horn/ sing joyfully before the King, the LORD. **(R)**

2. Let the sea and what fills it resound,/ the world and those who dwell in it;/ let the rivers clap their hands,/ the mountains shout with them for joy. **(R)**

3. Before the LORD, for he comes,/ for he comes to rule the earth,/ he will rule the world with justice/ and the peoples with equity. **(R)**

Second Reading (2 Thes 3:7–12)

The apostle Paul reminds the Thessalonians to conduct themselves in an orderly way. The Master should find the servants busy and active on his return.

A reading from the Second Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: You know how one must imitate us. For we did not act in a disorderly way among you, nor did we eat food received free from anyone. On the contrary, in toil and drudgery, night and day we worked, so as not to burden any of you. Not that we do not have the right. Rather, we wanted to present ourselves as a model for you, so that you might imitate us. In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others. Such people we instruct and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and to eat their own food.

—The word of the Lord.
All—Thanks be to God.

Alleluia (Lk 21:28) (*Stand*)

All—Alleluia, alleluia. Stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Lk 21:5–19)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

WHILE SOME PEOPLE were speaking about how the temple was adorned with costly stones and votive offerings, Jesus said, “All that you see here—the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down.”

Then they asked him, “Teacher, when will this happen? And what sign will there be when all these things are about to happen?” He answered, “See that you not be deceived, for many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and ‘The time has come.’ Do not follow them! When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for such things must happen first, but it will not immediately be the end.” Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues from place to place; and awesome sights and mighty signs will come from the sky.

“Before all this happens, however, they will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony. Remember, you are not to prepare your defense beforehand, for I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute. You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your

head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives.”

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Profession of Faith (*Stand*)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (at the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us ask the almighty Father to make us ready for the coming of his Son in glory by our participation in the building up of his Kingdom on earth. Waiting in joyful hope, we pray:

R—Father, listen to the prayers of your children.

C—May we be reminded that all things and realities in this world will pass away and so place our trust in God who will make all things new. We pray: **(R)**

C—May the Church’s preferential option for the poor and the vulnerable not just be about charity but a deep fraternal solidarity that recognizes them as fellow members of God’s family. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we become living temples of the Holy Spirit, offering to God right and just worship through a life of holiness. We pray: **(R)**

C—May we let ourselves be evangelized by the poor who enable us to discover in new ways the true face of the Father who is close to them and hears their cry. We pray: **(R)**

C—May Church and government officials show special concern for the poor and address the excessive forms of moral and social disorder that generate new forms of poverty and marginalization. We pray: **(R)**

C—May the Lord welcome our loved ones who have gone before us into paradise, where Lazarus is poor no longer, but enjoys the company of angels and saints. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: **(R)**

P—Heavenly Father, help us to be faithful to you just as you are faithful to us, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you forever and ever.

All—Amen.

**LITURGY OF
THE EUCHARIST**



Presentation of the Gifts (*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—Grant, O Lord, we pray, that what we offer in the sight

of your majesty may obtain for us the grace of being devoted to you and gain us the prize of everlasting happiness.
All—Amen.

Preface (*Ordinary V*)

P—The Lord be with you.
All—And with your spirit.
P—Lift up your hearts.
All—We lift them up to the Lord.
P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All—It is right and just.
P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you laid the foundations of the world and have arranged for the changing of times and seasons; you have formed man in your own image and set humanity over the whole world in all its wonder, to rule in your name over all you have made and for ever praise you in your mighty works, through Christ our Lord.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. (*Kneel*)

Acclamation (*Stand*)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

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Invitation to Communion

(*Kneel*)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(Ps 73:28)

To be near God is my happiness, to place my hope in God the Lord.

Prayer after Communion

(*Stand*)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

We have partaken of the gifts of this sacred mystery, humbly imploring, O Lord, that what your Son commanded us to do in memory of him may bring us growth in charity.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Solemn Blessing

P—Bow for the blessing. (*Pause*)

May the God of all consolation order your days

in his peace and grant you the gifts of his blessing.

All—Amen.

P—May he free you always from every distress and confirm your hearts in his love.

All—Amen.

P—So that on this life's journey you may be effective in good works, rich in the gifts of hope, faith, and charity, and may come happily to eternal life.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son (†), and the Holy Spirit, come upon you and remain with you forever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—The Mass has been offered. Go in the peace of Christ.

All—Thanks be to God.

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