

What Can I Do Today?

November 14, 2021, Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gospel of Mark 13:24-32

Fr. Brad

*“Where there is forgiveness of sin and lawless deeds, there is **no longer any offering for sin.**”*

As Catholic Christians, we believe that through Christ our sins are forgiven and there is **no further point in making offerings for sin.**

Our sacrifices of ourselves unite us in the love of God.

Christ has done for us what we never could have done for ourselves. Be mindful of this truth especially when you are discouraged or weighed down by feelings of guilt for sins you have already confessed.

It seems like some of the greatest tribulations in history are unfolding right now, at least for our generation. In our present day we find **competing ideologies trying to take over.**

According to our readings, human history will not end without the universal human recognition of Jesus as Lord of that history. What this will look like and when, nobody knows.

*“But **about that day or hour no one knows**, neither the Angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”* This reminds us that we participate with God, we don't play God. There is a lot one could say about this concept.

We can probably recall times where we have been confronted with people or messages about the end times that suggest a knowledge of the time and the hour that the world is going to end. Over the years, particular self proclaimed prophets or evangelists have spent a lot of time and energy trying to interpret the Book of Revelation and the signs of the times that would indicate when the end is coming. **Some have in fact tried to predict the day and the hour.**

Remember the kerfuffle at the end of the last millennium? And nothing happened. A lot of gullible people walked away feeling foolish, disappointed, and disillusioned. Facebook and other social media had not become a thing yet or who knows what further ludicrous ideas would have been spread around.

Our 1st Reading from the **Book of Daniel** speaks of **anguish in the end times** with some entering into everlasting life and some to everlasting contempt.

**In the Gospel**, Jesus also does speak of the end which is to come and it sounds pretty dramatic. **The sun will be darkened, stars will fall from the sky**, the powers in the heavens will be shaken. He says however that this will only happen **after the time of suffering**. And the Son of Man and the Angels will come in glory to gather His elect. **But nobody knows the day or hour, only the Father.**

**We human beings want to know and understand**, we were created for that search and we are impelled to WANT TO KNOW. However, if unbridled, this desire can derail us from the path of faith and trust in the mystery of God. **IN God there will always be mystery.** If not, he would no longer be God. When we do things without God, we make ourselves God. When we

make decisions and act without God, we make ourselves God. There is a wisdom from above that nourishes us a little at a time and we must learn patience, perseverance, long suffering in this world. **We have to accept the open endedness of certain things** and resist temptations to impulsive reactions.

WE can get all up in arms about our ideologies and politics of the way things should be handled at so many levels. But the bottom line is NOBODY KNOWS the full story but our Creator God. As much as we can learn about the physical world and the cosmos, the human body and brain, we can never scientifically examine the Spirit of God, the Source of life, and make ultimate proclamations (including how and when the world is going to end or how exactly our individual lives in this world will end---though we can speculate until the cows come home).

As followers of Christ, our faith is in a God who loves us, as revealed by the stories of the Old Testament and by Jesus Himself in Scripture. This is the most important narrative we can count on.

As Catholics we are not doomsday prophets and **we shouldn't get caught up in that game of predicting** the end of the world. **But** we should **take to heart the urgency and immediacy of the overall message** of the Gospel. We are to live every moment of every day in the expectation of Jesus. Whether it's tomorrow or a million years from now. We are to live in the constant awareness of the presence of Christ among us.

We are reminded that how we live our lives, spend our time, how we invest our time, has enormous significance. And we must not let fear of the future (uncertain as it is), paralyze us from living lives that nurture love of life and of others, and of ourselves.

Each one of us can remove the fear and trepidation surrounding the future and end times by focussing on what we have control over now and **what I can do today**.

Jesus tells us that heaven and earth will pass away but His words will not. They will still apply.

In this Eucharist, we celebrate together that Christ has declared victory over death through His death and resurrection and that this has cosmic implications. This promise is all that we really have and in faith, it is all we need. He assures us we do not need to be afraid if we trust in Him and follow His ways. All is in His hands. Our Creator God knows us intimately and holds us close to God's heart. And when we ourselves are loving enough, we start to discover that we begin to understand as well.

So, may we choose to hold our hearts close to His as we journey through the suffering and struggles of life along the path of holiness. And may we find that our fears and anxieties slowly and steadily fall away. Amen.