

**Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time– Year B**

**November 18, 2018**

**Christ the Good Shepherd, ORCC**

**Reflection by Father Charles Blanchard**

First Reading: Daniel 12:1-3

Psalm: Psalm 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11(1)

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:11-14, 18

Gospel: Mark: 13:24-32

Welcome to Christ the Good Shepherd. It's exciting to see so many people of divergent backgrounds who have decided to come here; to pray; to sing; and to affirm common ground. A common ground created out of Catholic ritual, tradition and history, and yet applied, in a new and creative way where all are welcome to hear God's Word and feast at this table where there is no partiality.

Today, the readings direct our attention to the end of time. You and I are promised, in remaining faithful, we shall not be destroyed. We are promised that the Archangel Michael will be there helping us. We are told that the one great sacrifice for sins has been made, and you and I must cling to the Lord.

My sisters and brothers, God will gather His elect, and we must be ready. There are so many hours in the "bank of life". How is our TIME spent?

Many people live in fear of the end of the world, the end of time, the great gathering of people by the Lord God. From my perspective, It is awesome to think; it's a memory moment to conjure up, that one day, we shall all be gathered to the Lord with all who have gone before us and those who come after us. The fear comes because there is always the possibility that I will not be counted among those who are chosen.

The first reading today, from the Book of Daniel, tells us: "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace." This is the kind of statement that makes us have a bit of fear. We hope that we shall be among those who shall live forever.

If we look at Scripture as a whole, this possibility of hell; of being separated from our great God of Peace and Love, of being rejected, is always there. On

the other hand, it is never the great focus of the Scripture. The focus of Scripture is

- God's everlasting love for us;
- God's desire that all be saved; and
- God's walking with us to lead us in the path of salvation.

While we should always be aware of our capacity to reject God and to reject the ways of God, you and I should be more aware of God's love for us and should try to respond to that love. God invites us to know His love, His saving power, His delight in us.

The Gospel from Mark is also about the final coming of the Lord and is clear that no one knows the day or the hour. How often we hear predictions based on Scripture about when the end of the world will happen. We should always listen politely and in our hearts listen to the words of the Lord: "But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

**The challenge is not to know when the end is coming, but to live today as if the end will be right now.** There is no sense in pretending with God. God knows our hearts and our minds, even more than we do. We must simply get on with living now as if this is our last moment—with no fear and no upset, completely trusting in the love of the Lord.

My sisters and brothers, today's scriptures; as the Liturgical season drawing to a close, remind me of a story.

A dear friend; whom I loved greatly in this life and who has gone before us marked with his own sign of faith, regularly challenged me about TIME; of living in the now; whereby one displaces doubt and fear and clearly affirms wholeness, peace and love.

My sisters and brothers, Brian Vincent Michael Sullivan championed this precious commodity of TIME. He unequivocally affirmed that the gift of TIME potentially wounded all heals! Brian would often exclaim, "Father Strangelove, just remember, 'TIME wounds all heals'!"

So, as we ponder the end-time, let us pray to be strong and forever be champions of wholeness, peace and love by living in the now.

- When you see injustice, right the wrong;
- When you hear fanciful facts which hold no ground in truth, reject and challenge them;
- When you touch life's end, know you're Golden in God's eyes and welcome home!

Thank you for effecting positive change in people's lives and making anew God's Peace and Love in this world!

Gracias de Dios para todos; God's grace be with all of us! Amen.