

Homily  
November 13, 2022  
33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
26:55-35:39

By your perseverance you shall secure your life.

As is always true at this time in November, we hear proclamations of the “end times.” It has many different names: the Eschaton, the theology of that is “Eschatology.” It just basically means, “the end times.”

In our First Reading from Malachi, we hear it known as “the Day of the Lord.” Now, Malachi is a very short book. He appears and then he’s gone. He appeared at some point after the return from exile and the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of Jerusalem. They worked very hard to put everything back together. So their lives became prosperous. They were successful. They had relied heavily on Ezra and Nehemiah to help them do this. And they had done well.

But then Malachi, in his time and soon thereafter, has to deal with what we don’t completely hear of in our reading today, but precedes it.

He has to deal with priests of the people who are sacrificing blind and lame animals. The Covenant called for unblemished, perfect animals. That was their stewardship before God, who had given them everything. They were to give him the best, but the priests had become mediocre in what they did. And they weren’t doing what they were supposed to do. - I mean after all, life was good.

The people had begun to abandon their moral living, how they treated one another, which was part of the Covenant. In fact, the Covenant of Moses, other than the liturgical law, the sacrificial law, is about “how do we live together?” -- As a people, as believers and with our neighbors. The Law guided them in that.

But they were doing very well. And they lost that sense of purpose to live out the Covenant. They became complacent. Life is good. Why do we have to work hard? Life is good. We worked hard. We did it. That’s enough.

But that’s not what they were called to do. Malachi makes it very clear. No.

The day of the Lord will come upon you and if you are so complacent and mediocre, you will not be ready. Because you have immersed yourselves in what the Lord has given you: a really good life – but not the good life in Covenant living, in faithful living.

Have you ever been invited to go somewhere, to an event, and the person who invited you was all enthusiastic about it, and you said, “Ahh...no.” Either because it was a large crowd and you have a fear of crowds. Or you’re anxious about what the event was. Or it just doesn’t float your boat. So you back away.

The Day of the Lord is like that. In Malachi, the reading we had today makes it very clear. Those who had been living mediocre or complacent would not be ready. They would not embrace it. And it would cost them. Those

however, who were living what they had promised to live and he promises them, they would be ready. They would embrace it. They would not run from it or just say, “no.”

I would suggest to us, my brothers and sisters that this week, we take some time and look at our own lives. We are in the Covenant of Christ Jesus. He has given us great promises. He has shown us a way of living that is to care for each other. He has shown us that the Father, the Spirit and his people care a great deal for us.

But because things are good –(inflation...don't worry about that) – but because our lives are pretty comfortable, we can get complacent. And we can even accept mediocre worship on our part and on the part of our own ministers. (We do our best not to do that here.)

But still we can get complacent, can't we? “Oh, it's fine. We'll get by.”

That's not what we're called to. And if we live that way, when the Eschaton arrives, we'll be really surprised. We won't be ready to wrap our arms around our Lord who has been so good to us. And be thankful.

Last week I began the homily with the Opening Prayer. This week I am going to close it with our Opening Prayer. Not always does the Opening Prayer speak to what the readings have to say. That's because the Opening Prayer works for three different Sundays: A, B and C.

I want to go back to the Opening Prayer. Listen to it within the context of what we have just heard.

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.

May we serve with constancy that author of all that is good.