



LIVING THE GOSPEL

**33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time.
November 16th 2025**

Theme: "By your perseverance you will secure your lives."

Gathering Prayer

All: 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, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Exploring the Word

Gospel Reading: Luke 21:5-19

⁵ When some were talking about the Temple, remarking how it was adorned with fine stonework and votive offerings, he said, ⁶ 'All these things you are staring at now-the time will come when not a single stone will be left on another: everything will be destroyed'.

⁷ And they put to him this question: 'Master,' they said 'when will this happen, then, and what sign will there be that this is about to take place?'

⁸ 'Take care not to be deceived,' he said 'because many will come using my name and saying, "I am he" and, "The time is near at hand". Refuse to join them.

⁹ And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened, for this is something that must happen but the end is not so soon.'

¹⁰ Then he said to them, 'Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

¹¹ There will be great earthquakes and plagues and famines here and there; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. ¹² 'But before all this happens, men will seize you and persecute you; they will hand you over to the synagogues and to imprisonment, and bring you before kings and governors because of my name ¹³ - and that will be your opportunity to bear witness.

¹⁴ Keep this carefully in mind: you are not to prepare your defence, ¹⁵ because I myself shall give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to resist or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relations and friends; and some of you will be put to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by all men on account of my name, ¹⁸ but not a hair of your head will be lost. ¹⁹ Your endurance will win you your lives.

Gospel Focus

In this gospel, Jesus gives a chilling account of the end times-there will be false prophets to resist, wars to survive, natural disasters to outlive, and persecutions to endure. This is the end for which Jesus often admonishes us to "stay awake" and "be ready." Almost in contrast to that, though, this gospel tells us not to go to our

interrogations *too* prepared, because Jesus will be with us all the while. It is he who will speak through us, providing wisdom and salvation even when all seems lost. We will need to provide perseverance in the face of all these adverse events, but we never need to fear we will face them alone.

Gospel Reflection

Today and in Jesus time, people marvel at the beauty and grandeur of exquisite architecture. It can even lift the mind and heart, helping people feel connected to the divine. In today's gospel reading, Jesus interrupts the reverie of the onlookers at the monumental temple in Jerusalem to declare that not one stone would be left upon another.

As a Jewish reformer, Jesus frequently spoke and acted in ways that called into question religious structures both external and internal that impeded right relationship with God and one another. However, for any Jew, the destruction of the temple by Roman imperial forces would provoke a severe crisis. Everything would have to be resignified. The temple symbolised their connection with God and with their fellow believers. And it was in the temple that the sacrificial cult was exercised in obedience to the commands of the Torah.

Luke's Gospel, of course, was written some fifteen years after the temple had been razed. We can imagine the struggles of the Jewish Christian members of the Lukan community who had to redefine their Jewishness, not only in the absence of their temple, but also as members of a mixed community of Gentile and Jewish followers of Jesus. The Gentile members also had to reconstruct their internal architecture when they took on a Christian identity.

In today's gospel, there is a progression, as the discussion moves from the destruction of the temple to cataclysmic happenings that wreck destruction on the earth and among peoples and, finally, to threats against one's life. It envisions crises on every level, moving toward an apocalyptic end time. Jesus' audience does not ask if such will happen. Rather, they ask when it will come about and if they will have advance warning. Jesus never answers those questions. Instead, he directs his listeners how to respond to these crises. If they are following him, then they too will say and do things that threaten some of the political and religious structures of their day. Any who claim his name will surely experience the same kind of fury that was directed at him for doing such things.

Jesus does not leave his disciples defenceless in such times of crisis. First of all, he reminds his followers not to follow after anyone else; their attention must remain steadfastly on him. When their focus is on him and not on their tribulations, they are able to stand fearless. He speaks the same words that Gabriel spoke to Zechariah and Mary when their worlds were turned upside down: "Do not be afraid" (Luke 1: 13,30)

When disciples are seized, persecuted, and handed over to the authorities because of Jesus' name, these are times to testify to the power of God. Jesus explains that the testimony is not a speech that one composes ahead of time. The preparation consists in persevering in a life of faithfulness and trust in the One who provoked crises by his manner of life. It is he, who is himself the temple (to borrow from Johannine theology), who will give the necessary wisdom for speech and action in the critical moment.

Old/New Testament and CCC links

First Reading – Mal 3:19-20a

¹⁹ For 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. 20aBut for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice

with its healing rays run through the stubble, so will they. ⁸ They shall judge nations, rule over peoples, and the Lord will be their king forever. ⁹ They who trust in him will understand the truth, those who are faithful will live with him in love; for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

Responsorial Reading – Ps 98:5-6, 7-8, 9

R: The Lord comes to rule the earth with justice. (R)

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)**

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)**

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 Thess 3:7-12

⁷ For you know how one must imitate us. For we did not act in a disorderly way among you, ⁸ 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. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. ¹¹ We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others. ¹² Such people we instruct and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and to eat their own food.

Catechism of The Catholic Church

675 – Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. (Cf. *Lk* 18:8; *Mt* 24:12.) The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth (Cf. *Lk* 21:12; *Jn* 15:19-20.) will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh. (Cf. *2 Thess* 2:4-12; *1 Thess* 5:2-3; *2 Jn* 7; *1 Jn* 2:18,22.)

Sharing and Discussion

1. "Paul reminded the Thessalonians that faith is often learned through example. "Is there someone whose faith has awakened in you a longing to live more fully in God's presence?"
2. "In a world filled with instability and noise, what helps you remain at peace in Christ?"
3. The gospel reading ends with Jesus calling the disciples to perseverance. What does "persevering in faith," mean to you when life feels uncertain or painful?

Closing Prayer

All: Lord God, you come to us in righteousness and truth to fulfill all our needs. May you hear our prayers this day and always. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.