

Homily for Monday of 33rd week

November 19, 2018

We are heading into Advent in less than two weeks. The Church is preparing us for Advent by using gospel texts from Jesus' apocalyptic discourses. Apocalypse is a literary form dealing with the end of times. And so today we have the beginning of the only NT apocalypse the Book of Revelation.

Apocalypse begins with letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor about 60 years after the death of Jesus. Originally these churches were evangelized by St. Paul and his associates, some 40 years before. Like St. Paul they expected the end of the world in their lifetimes and so they had great fervor in their devotion to Christ. But the years passed and the end did not come, and so their fervor waned. That is what John's letter to them is lamenting. He warns them that unless they recover that devotion to the way of Christ, they will lose their place in the reign of God.

The meaning for us is quite simple. The prayer "Deliver us O Lord" right after the Our Father in every Mass has these words, "...as we await in joyful hope the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ." Are you waiting in joyful hope for the second coming of Jesus? You should be. Why?

Because if you are living as Jesus asks, then you meet with contradictions and opposition at every turn. You try to live up to his commands, but you fall short. You try to make your family a place of forgiveness and love, but you are not there yet. You try to get justice into our city or national government, but you do not succeed. And yet we still want God's reign to come to our world. But it will come only at the end of time. Then the perfect justice and love for which you hunger will finally come to fulfillment.

Next Sunday we celebrate the feast of Christ the King. As king of our minds and hearts, Jesus does empower our attempts at forgiveness, love, and peace right now. But his full kingship will come only at the end of time. If you hunger for his perfect fulfillment of your desires, then you "wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ." It is your good news.