

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (Mk 13:24-32): Jesus said to his disciples: "In those days after that tribulation the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

"And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory, and then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.

"Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates. Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."

“Know that he is near”

Fr. Pedro IGLESIAS Martínez
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Today, we recall how, at the beginning of the liturgical year, the Church prepared us for the first arrival of Christ that brings the salvation to us. Two weeks before the end of the year, the Church prepares us for the second coming, when the last and definitive word about each one of us will be said.

Before today's Gospel we might have thought “we have a long wait to expect”, but “the time is near” (cf. Mk 13:29). But, nevertheless, in our society it bothers us—and it is even incorrect!— to mention death. Yet, we can hardly speak of resurrection without remembering we are to die. For each one of us, the end of the world starts the day we pass away, when the time allotted to each one to make our choice, will be over. The Gospel is always a Good News and Christ God is God of Life: why such fear? Perhaps for lack of trust?

Bearing in mind the immediacy of this judgment we ought to know how to become strict judges, not of the others, but of ourselves. We must avoid the snare of self justification, of the relativism or of the idea that “I do not see it like that”... Jesus Christ offers himself to us through the Church and, with Him, the means and resources to avoid that this universal judgment may be the day of our doom, instead of the day when, at long last, the most hidden truths of the conflicts that have so much tormented men will be brought to light.

The Church announces we have a Savior, Christ, our Lord. Let us have fewer fears and be more coherent in our behavior with what we believe! “When we come into God's presence, we shall be asked two things, whether we were in the Church, and whether we worked in the Church. Everything else is worthless” (Card. J.H. Newman). The Church not only teaches how to die, but also how to live to be able to rise. Because what it preaches is not its message, but the message from God, whose word is the source of all life. Only from that hope can we serenely face the judgment of God.