

1st Sunday of Advent C 2024.

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the



ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of

Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.'

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.'

Thoughts:

The Gospel of this Sunday leads us to meditate on the teaching of Jesus on the end of the world. Today, when we speak of the end of the world, the reactions are quite varied. Some are fearful. Others are indifferent. Others begin to take life more seriously. Others still, as soon as they hear some terrible news, say: "The end of the world is drawing near!"

Some Questions:

- a) What did you feel during the reading? Did you feel fear or peace? Why?
- b) Did you come across anything in the text that gave you hope and courage?
- c) What is it today that urges people to have hope and to keep going?
- d) Why is it that at the **beginning** of Advent, the Church confronts us with the **end** of the world?
- e) What can we answer to those who say that the end of the world is drawing near?
- f) How do we understand the image of the coming of the Son of man on a cloud?

For us 21st century people, apocalyptic language seems strange, difficult and confused. But for the people of those times it was the common way of speaking and all understood. It expressed the strong certitude of the faith of the little ones. In spite of all and against all appearances, they continued to believe that God is the Lord of history. The main purpose of apocalyptic language is to foster the faith and hope of the poor. In Luke's time, many of the people of the communities thought that the end of the world was close at hand and that Jesus would have come back. That is why there were those who stopped working: "Why work, if Jesus was returning?" (cf 2 Ts 3:11). Others stared at heaven, waiting for the return of Jesus on the clouds (cf Acts 1:11). Jesus' words shows that no one knows the hour of the final coming. Today we have the same thing! Some await the coming of Jesus so much that they do not see his presence among us, in our daily concerns and events.

OUR ADVENT PRAYER

MARANATHA
Come, Lord Jesus!