

'WORLD DAY OF THE POOR. HUMBLE ALERTNESS TO GOD & NEIGHBOUR'

18 November 2018 – 33rd Sunday Ordinary Time

GOSPEL OF MARK 13:24-32

In the verse before today's passage, we hear

'But be alert; I have already told you everything.'

In the verse after today's passage, we hear

'Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.'

The context of today's passage:

Jesus has left the temple
and is sitting on the Mount of Olives,
with Peter, James, John and Andrew
and they are able to view the temple from there.

These four disciples were the first that Jesus had called to follow him.

The beginning and end come together.

The scene is set for the Passover in the next chapter.

Though the suffering and death of Jesus are still to come,

Jesus prepares his disciples for the end days when

he will come in the clouds and call the elect together.

We move from the call of the four to the call of all the elect.

The Gospel reads:

***'But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.***

***Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds"
with great power and glory.***

***Then he will send out the angels,
and gather his elect from the four winds,
from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.***

From the fig tree learn its lesson:

***as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves,
you know that summer is near.***

***So also, when you see these things taking place,
you know that he is near, at the very gates.***

***Truly I tell 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 about that day or hour no one knows,
neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.'***

HUMBLE ALERTNESS TO GOD & NEIGHBOUR

In a spirit of alertness, of being genuinely prepared, we live our lives as Christians.
Not a worried and anxious and stifled alertness
but a humble alertness as we trust in God.

We remember from two weeks ago the Gospel passage with the greatest commandment of the loving God and loving our neighbour.
That sensitivity in love, to love fully.

In the homily today we reflect -

- *on an ALERTNESS to being humble before God*
- *and an ALERTNESS to avoid self-serving attitudes in loving the poor as neighbour:*

The quotes on alertness to humility come from **Saint Pope John XXIII**

The quotes on alertness away from selfish love of neighbour come from **Pope Francis**.

LOVING GOD FULLY – THE EXAMPLE OF ANGELO RONCALLI

There is much pressure today on many young people.

Let us go back over the life of one person's journey and how he dealt with pressure, and reflect for ourselves on his inner journey,

Many years ago **Angelo Roncalli** - later Pope John XXIII – wrote, as a young man in 1904, aged 22, and turning 23 later in the year, that

"In all things there must be humility".

In his personal journal during his prayer retreat 27 Sept -2 Oct 1914, aged 32, he said

"... As for fantastic dreams in which my pride may indulge, thoughts of honours, positions, etc., I will be very careful not to entertain them, but will spurn them at once. They upset one's peace of mind, sap one's energy, and take all real joy and all value and merit from anything good one may do. For myself, I must think only of remaining very humble, very, very humble, leaving everything else to God."

Earlier on the 10th August 1914, reflecting on ten years of ministry as a priest, he wrote

"Preoccupations about the future, which arise from self-love, delay the work of God in us and hinder his purposes, without even furthering our material interests. I need to be very watchful about this, every day, because I foresee that with the passing of years, and perhaps in the near future, I shall have many struggles with my pride."

The next year he was under great incredible pressure.
He was a medic and later a chaplain during the First World War.

He was free within himself to cry when he saw firsthand the terrors of war and waste of human life.

He tended the injured and dying and these experiences remained with him. He lived out a humble and genuine peace within his love of neighbour.

It is a life long journey to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength. John XXIII was known for his goodness and humility and trust in God. In 1947 he wrote in his journal,

‘The sense of my unworthiness keeps me good company: it makes me put all my trust in God.’

In 1956, two years before he became Pope, he wrote that God had granted him in life, the gift of a sense of insufficiency

‘the sense of my own insufficiency, which is always with me and preserves me from vanity, is a great gift from the Lord, it keeps me simple and saves me from making a fool of myself ... in the Gospel Jesus teaches us to be and gentle humble, naturally this is not the same thing as being weak and easy-going. Everything that smacks of pretentiousness and self-assertion is only selfishness and comes to nought.’

In the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, he was able to encourage the USA and the Soviet Union to keep in dialogue.

As a simple young man, Angelo grew through the many pressures he faced and through the ages of life to become more simple and loving in God. As a Christian, as a son and brother, as a priest, as a medic and chaplain, as an historian, as an archbishop, as a peace-maker, as a diplomat, as a Cardinal, and in his daring leadership as Pope John XXIII.

We pause and pray that we grow more simple and loving in God. [Pause]

LOVING OUR NEIGHBOUR - WORLD DAY OF THE POOR.

Another Pope, our current **Pope Francis**, desires that the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time be a World Day of the Poor. Beginning in 2017, this is the [2nd annual World Day of the Poor](#). In all our parish Masses this weekend, a parish St Vincent de Paul member prays for all the people assisted, and another member brings up the Poor Box. Near the end of each Mass, a parish member will invite us to help with hampers for the families of prisoners.

In his reflection on this day, on the cry of the poor, Pope Francis alerts us to the danger of **not being humble** in our love of the poor.

‘What does the cry of the poor express, if not their suffering and their solitude, their disappointment and their hope?’

We can ask ourselves how their plea, which rises to the presence of God, can fail to reach our own ears or leave us cold and indifferent. On this World Day of the Poor, we are called to make a serious examination of conscience, to see if we are truly capable of hearing the cry of the poor. To hear their voice, what we need is the silence of people who are prepared to listen. If we speak too much ourselves, we will be unable to hear them. At times I fear that many initiatives, meritorious and necessary in themselves, are meant more to satisfy those who undertake them than to respond to the real cry of the poor. When this is the case, the cry of the poor resounds, but our reaction is inconsistent and we become unable to empathize with their condition. We are so trapped in a culture that induces us to look in the mirror and pamper ourselves, that we think that an altruistic gesture is enough, without the need to get directly involved."

YOUTH

The Deanery Youth Candle was lit by Dina at this 9am Mass after the Opening Prayer and before the Procession of the Word.

Today we thank God for the youth of our parish family.

I thank them for their participation, their giftedness and their insights.

One of our youth members – Jess - wishes to update and thank the wider parish after Communion.

The youth and young adults will carry out the parish symbolic fabric joyfully during the Recessional Hymn.


Let us continue to humbly share our insights into God's goodness.

Let us pray.

Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/111818.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook18112018>]

A young child with short, curly hair is peering over a rusty metal ledge. The child's face is partially obscured by the ledge, and they are looking directly at the camera with a curious expression. The background is blurred, showing other people in a public setting.

“To hear their voice,
what we need is the
silence of people
prepared to listen”

World Day of the Poor

HOMILY: WORLD DAY OF THE POOR
HUMBLE ALERTNESS TO GOD & NEIGHBOUR