

33rd Sunday
11/13/2022

PERSEVERANCE

This is a sobering gospel. If this is the good news, we don't want to know what the bad news is. And yet, Jesus speaking the truth is good news. A warning sign of one type or another, is there not to harm us but to protect us from harm. Jesus speaks about the destruction of the temple that happened in the year 70, he warns about false messiahs and talks about following him. The key to all this is found in one word: perseverance. *By perseverance you will secure your lives.*

In ancient Israel the pride and joy of the nation was the temple. For Jesus to speak about its destruction would be devastating. In moments of devastation we hold on in faith, perseverance and a patient trust in God.

Jesus warns about false messiahs. They're around us in many ways. Some are busy predicting the end of the world but that day comes and goes and we're still here but there are other false messiahs that can be much more deceiving: materialism, prejudice, violence, racism, pleasure and many others.

Here in the Eucharist we're strengthened to persevere. Here Jesus nourishes our perseverance with his body and blood, with his very self. The Eucharist should keep us focused so we're not misled.

Perseverance literally means to serve through. To serve through the good times. To serve through the bad times. To serve through all the times in between. Jesus goes on to say that following him can involve division of families, betrayal and death. Mercifully, this isn't usually the case but it is a possibility.

Sometimes we think if we do the right thing we won't get into trouble and so often that is true. But sometimes we will find ourselves getting into trouble *because* we do what is right. Many of our brothers and sisters around the world can face death simply by coming to Mass as we do now. Being faithful to Christ can cost us in our professional life, our social life and even our family life.

In times of collapse or devastation, our foundation remains in Christ. They are false messiahs that we try to avoid. Instead we listen to Jesus saying, *See that you not be deceived....By perseverance, you will secure your lives.*