

There is a battle raging in our world

We see this in nature

The four seasons battle with each other

Life gives way to death and hibernation

We call it the dead of winter for a reason

Then life gains hold in the spring

We see it in our lives

There will be wars and insurrections

Earthquakes, famines and plagues

Beneath human history is God's story

A love story and a war story

At times one or the other might seem to be more in focus

But there is a constant current beneath

So we know that what is here today

Will not go away entirely

But will go beneath the surface

Until it is pushed to the top once again

This story has roots before humankind

God creating everything for one reason

Because of His love

The angels dividing into 2 camps

One with Michael

The other siding with Satan

Adam and Eve in the Garden

Falling to temptation and original sin

God sending His Only Son

Only to fall to the crucifixion

And then to rise from the dead

The battle continues to our own day

WW I, WW II, Vietnam, Korea, ISIS, abortion, euthenasia

Times of war

Times of peace

All part of a love story

A story of salvation history written by the hand of God

Played out in the history of mankind

As we read and live this story

We are called to avoid 2 mistakes

One is to deny this worldview

That this end of time thinking is just hysteria

It is meaningless to our life

The other temptation is to focus entirely on the end time

And forget to engage in the battle at hand

We see this in our reading from Malachi

The Israelite community had been in exile

They were slaves in Babylon, far from the Promised Land

But now they were back home

But they don't know what to make of this situation

The Book of Malachi is a series of 6 disputations or disputes with God

The people asking how God could treat them this way

The sixth dispute precedes our reading today

It is vain to serve our God

What is the good of keeping his charge?

We deem the arrogant blessed

The evildoers not only prosper

But when they put God to the test, they escape

Does this seem familiar to anyone today?

Where is the justice?

Where are the blessings that were promised?

Our reading today is God's response to this dispute

It is a response of punishment and mercy

The day is coming

When all evildoers will be stubble

But for you that fear my name

There will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays

Although not in our reading today

In Malachi 3:16, he speaks of a book of remembrance

Similar to the one we use to pray for our loved ones

God has a book of remembrance

To record the name of those that serve Him in this life

We see Christ warning of similar things in our Gospel

People were commenting on the beauty of the Temple

The costly stones

The votive offerings

For the Jews, it was the pinnacle of their faith

The place where God literally met with man

A microcosm of the universe

The place of God's glory

But by the time of Christ

It had become an empty symbol

For many, their faith was mostly external obligations

All done for show

And now Christ tells them

There will come a day

When it will all be gone

Not one stone left upon another

They had to ask themselves

If this is the case with the Temple

What does it mean of us as God's Chosen Ones?

And why does the Temple have to be destroyed?

Wouldn't it be nice to go visit it today?

We can and do visit the Temple at every Mass

Not the old temple of Israel

But the living Temple of the New Covenant

The Temple of the resurrected Christ

We see this in the Eucharist

The Temple in which we are the living stones

Created in His image and likeness

This is the Temple where God meets his children

The Mystical Body of Christ

Where our sins have been atoned for

Not by the blood of animals

But by the Blood of the Innocent Lamb

The Blood of Christ

What Malachi's warning teaches us

What Christ's warning teach us

All this is pertinent to our times

We are called to live today

To build His kingdom

Reading and watching the news we can become pessimistic

We all saw this leading up to our last election

No matter which side you might have been on

As Catholic Christians we need to take in the big picture

We have a savior

And it is not the democratic or the republican party

What is here today

Will be gone tomorrow

Only to return at another time

That has been going on since the dawn of time

There is a battle that is being waged right now

It is constantly going on beneath the surface

At times it rages all around us in the physical world

Through all of this we are called to join the battle

Follow Paul's advice to the Thessalonians

Do not sit on the sidelines

Do not act as busybodies

But become busy living

Work quietly for the kingdom

But work

Waiting in idleness is Satan's trap

Just as a woman expecting her child is busy preparing for the baby

Preparing for new life

We are called to work and prepare for the coming of the kingdom

We know not the day not the hour

But we do know it will arrive

For some here it will undoubtable arrive this year

Are you ready?

It is certain that every one of us will experience it at some point

Are we ready?

God is in control

Yesterday, today and tomorrow

No amount of suffering, persecution or human trial will change this

If we stay united with Christ

By your perseverance you will secure your lives

In his sacraments

Especially baptism, the Eucharist and confession

In the end his love, his justice

His mercy will write the last chapter

This is the promise of Advent begins in only 2 weeks

It is the anticipation of the ultimate triumph of God

Over chaos, sin and death

The triumph of God in this little child Jesus Christ

On Christmas morning

When there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays of mercy