

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, November 14, 2021

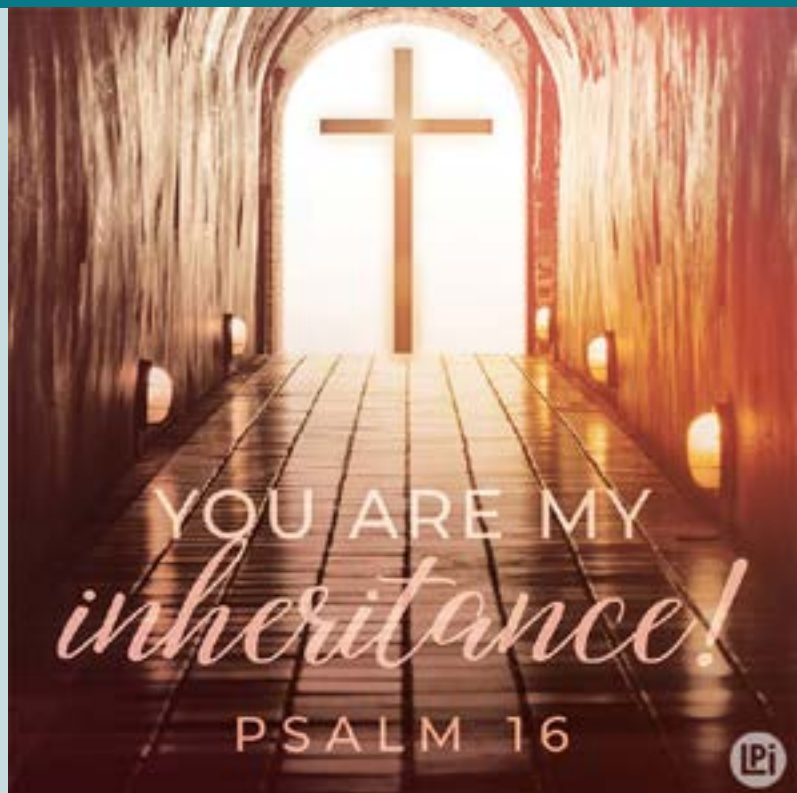
You Can Always Find Hope

Written by Alison Gingras

Daniel 12:1-3

Hebrews 10:11-14, 18

Mark 13:24-32



On Thanksgiving Day, I decided to attend Mass. It had only been a few months since returning to the Church after an extended absence; however, I would not classify participation before the break as faithful. I thought it made perfect sense to attend the celebration of the Eucharist, whose very meaning is — thanksgiving. Unaware of the liturgical calendar, I went expecting joyful readings about gratitude and, well, thanksgiving. However, that is not what I heard, not even close. Hello, doom and gloom!

The liturgical calendar spans from the First Sunday of Advent to the Solemnity of Christ the King. I have discovered the alignment of the end of the liturgical calendar with readings focused on the end times. At first glance, the weeks' readings leading up to Advent become foreboding, ominous, and even a little depressing. One has to search really hard to find the hope, but it is there. Thanks to the Resurrection, one can always find hope!

While Daniel sets up the doom, the Responsorial Psalm dispels the gloom. Here we find the words, "I set the LORD ever before me; with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed." Then, the author of Hebrews records, "For by one offering he has made perfect forever those who are being consecrated." Once, for all. Alleluia, what could be more hopeful than that!

Fast forward many years after that eye-opening Thanksgiving Mass, my life relationship with the Lord and the Church has grown significantly. This winding down of both calendars has become my chosen time to consecrate myself to Jesus through Mary using [St. Louis de Montfort's Total Consecration](#) method. I love preparing for the coming of Christmas by devoting time to the scriptures, Marian prayers, and spiritual reading. I tend to get caught up in the secularism of the holidays, hence my assuming the "Thanksgiving" themed Mass!

Soon we'll be entering the season of Advent, a time to prepare for the coming of Christ, not just in remembrance of his first coming in the Feast of his Nativity but also in the understanding he will come again. We need to prepare our hearts and homes not only for our company (yeah, finally!) but for the greatest guest of all: Christ.

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus explains what to expect when he returns — "And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory." Furthermore, it reminds us to heed these warnings, so we are not caught unaware. To remember, though heaven and earth pass away — his words, his teaching, he, himself, does not. Be alert, be prepared. Although we know not the hour, every year, the Church provides us a time to pause, reflect, and prepare with the cycle of the liturgies and the great devotions of our faith. From the darkness comes a great light. As we pass from Advent to Christmas, let us enjoy the celebrations, careful not to leave Jesus out of them, and most importantly, ready our homes and our hearts to receive him.

- Alison Gingras

PRAYER

Let us pray along with the Church today with words from the Responsorial Psalm.

*You are my inheritance,
my allotted portion, and my cup,
Oh Lord, and to whom I hold fast.*