

33 OTB.18; Dan 12:1-3; Heb 10:11-18; Mark 13:24-32; *The Second Spring*

In the 21st century the word “Apocalypse” brings, **Fear.**

In the 1st century the word “Apocalypse” brought, **Hope.**

What happened? Consider this natural image....

It has been said that, "*Autumn is a second spring where every leaf is a flower.*"

-Albert Camus

Fall comes. Summer is over. Winter is on its way. And even though Fall appears to be a season of death, *it isn't really*. The trees are not dying: *their precious vitality is stored in their roots beneath the ground*. When outward circumstances change (and they will), these same trees will sprout *brand new* leaves.

Fall is a sign of the *ingenuity of God*.

When things appear to be gone, new life bursts forth.

And now an historical image. In 1912, as political events rushed toward World War I, the French poet, Charles Péguy wrote, “The Portal of the Mystery of Hope”. Part of it read, “*The [virtue] I love best, says God, is hope. Faith doesn't surprise me ...[creation is so resplendent] ...Charity doesn't surprise me... these poor creature ...unless they had a heart of stone, how could they not have love? But hope, says God, that is something that surprises me. Even me ...That these poor children see how things are going and believe...That is surprising and it's by far the greatest marvel...of our grace. And I'm surprised by it myself.*”

(*Celebration*, 11/18/18)

Péguy's reflection opens up a new horizon for our understanding of Apocalypse. Apocalyptic literature is not so much fire and brimstone and the public comeuppance of evil doers ... as it is about **God's exaltation of the innocent!**

Today, the *Book of Daniel & Mark's Gospel*, invite us into the apocalyptic perspective which proclaims *that the worst of times will give birth to the best of times*. Apocalypse simply means revelation or more accurately, “unveiling.”

**God's “hidden” Kingdom is being revealed over time.
Will you and I be ready when the Future comes?**

Here's a little story

"There was a mother mouse who was running across the kitchen floor with her family of 6 little mice in tow. Suddenly she came eye to-eye with a very large and very mean looking cat. The mother mouse was terrified! But she pulled herself up to full height, squared her shoulders, and roared at the top of her lungs, "**Bow wow!**" The cat nearly jumped out of his skin, and in the blink of an eye was scrambling up a tree two blocks away. Meanwhile, the mother mouse gathered her little ones around her and explained, "now children,

... you see the importance of learning a second language!" *Sunday Mornings, Clark*

2 Sooner or later we all come face to face with our own version of that monster cat - face to face with an *event or circumstance* that tells us that our world and our ... life as we have known it has come to an end.

The challenging possibilities are endless: an irreversible illness, death of a spouse or friend, rejection by our loved ones, abandonment by our friends, total loss of our fortune, or the failure in our life's work. And, that's just the short list!

The possibilities are endless, and we've all had a taste of them.

We all know what the Gospel means when it talks about the

... sun being darkened and the stars falling out of the sky. Yes and Yes!

So, it's of *more than passing interest* to discover **how** we are to survive when, inevitably, those moments do come. **What do we do?**

The Gospel gives us the key: "**When all these things happen,**" *it says, "you will see the Son of Man coming with great power and glory."* That means that when our personal world falls apart and the bottom drops out of our lives, we'll be able to see past the difficulties and see through the pain to the ultimate reality of things which is: *despite- all appearances, God is still in charge, still cares, still has the power to make all things right, and still intends to do just that in God's good time!*

Now what is it that enables us to see all that so clearly when disaster has struck so hard? Listen to Jesus: **Heaven and earth will pass away,**

... but my words will not pass away.

Spoken 21 centuries ago, the words of Jesus have **not** passed away. Just like Mark's gospel community in 1st century Rome, we live in turmoil & uncertainty. We too wonder about *the return of Jesus*. That first community decided to have hope. They knew that anyone who believed & acted on the Jesus' message of God's love and concern ... and served *that Mission* would be welcomed

... by the Son of Man. They believed. They loved. They hoped.

That **Hope** is now ours, passed along from one generation to the next. Jesus' words have instructed millions in the ways of holiness, inspired the discouraged, ... and consoled those who have faced many pains and sorrows.

Jesus is the eternal *High Priest, who is like us in all things, but sin.* He lived, suffered, died and rose **FOR us. He offers a sign. The *Fig tree* is an evergreen, but it loses its leaves in yearly cycles like deciduous trees in colder climates.**

Farmers knew Spring was near when they saw a change in the fig's branches. ***At this Liturgy of Divine Hope,* remember the words of Jesus will not pass away because **HE will not pass away.** **What do we do until the *Spring?*****

May I suggest:

Dream as though you have nothing to lose.

Believe as though anything is possible.

Love as though your heart knows no bounds.

And Live as though there is only today. Unk.