

- So Jesus tells us today: “...*they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory, and then he will send out the angels **and gather his elect**...*”
- Well...who are “his elect”?
- “Elect”, of course, means “chosen”. So who are to be the chosen?
- Simply those who follow the Word of God—which Jesus Christ IS—and seek to do God’s will in their lives.

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- This Gospel reading dovetails very nicely with our first reading from Daniel: “...*your people shall escape, everyone who is found written in the book...*”
  - ...which itself dovetails with Revelation where we read: “...*another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, by what they had done” (Rev 20:12)...and “...*nothing unclean shall enter [the Heavenly city], nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*” (Rev 21:27)...names penned in that book with the ink of love of God...love of neighbor.*
  - These are the words of God...and as Jesus assures us today: “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.*”

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- Now, if those who heard my homily Friday will allow me, you’ll hear much of the same today...because as we approach the end of the liturgical year, we come to the same theme of the Church’s anticipation of Christ’s second coming and the attendant fulfillment of the kingdom of God...which we celebrate next Sunday with the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

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- As I mentioned in Friday’s homily, one of the things strongly emphasized to us in Marine boot camp is a sense of urgency—moving quickly with purpose.

- To move slowly or ineffectively would inevitably lead to close “personal inspiration” given by one or more drill instructors. Singularly unpleasant...yet most memorable, and corrective.
- This sense of urgency of something that Jesus, the apostles and the saints are continually stressing...for as Jesus reminds us today: “...of that day or hour [of our judgment], no one knows...only the Father”...because, as He says in many places in the Gospels, “... you know neither the day nor the hour.”
- Whether we are in a couple of twin towers in New York City, or living our daily lives in Paradise Hills, CA, or simply driving a car on a highway...we must always be prepared. Thus the urgency of fidelity.

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- This was brought home to me yet again as I returned from TX the other day...on the Indianapolis I-40 between Clines Corner and Moriarty.
  - Road workers were patching a pothole in the right lane of a steep curve. One little sign a few hundred yards before...no cones, no lights, little warning.
  - An 18-wheeler pulled out suddenly into the left lane in front of me, coming almost to a stop...but in plenty of time for me to slow down.
  - However...I watched helplessly in my rearview mirror as a car, behind me several hundred yards away, barreling in at full speed...not slowing down...driver’s head down as though texting...myself trapped...truck in front, and truck and guardrail to each side.
  - “Please look up, young lass” is the printable version of what I was thinking.
  - *Gracias a Dios*, she finally did...and slammed on the brakes.
  - But...the “day and hour” might have come that quickly...for me and for her. One moment singing along with Johnny Horton (“In 1814 we took a little trip...”)...and the next, singing (hopefully) with angels.
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- We tend to “put off”...to procrastinate...in our seeking greater devotion to God and adherence to His will...
- ...much like St. Augustine when he was living with his mistress prior to his conversion...agonizing over converting...and his famous plea of procrastination: “Lord, make me chaste. But not yet.”
- But at some point...hopefully before it’s too late...every one of the elect—of God’s chosen—has finally grit his teeth and said: “No more of this foolishness! I WILL be faithful to God!!”
- For, as St. Paul tells us: “...*whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.*” (Galatians 6:7-9)
- This is the self-control and self-mastery that the apostles and saints remind us are essential for holiness...as we remember the book of Wisdom: “...*if any one loves righteousness, her labors are virtues; for she teaches self-control and prudence, justice and courage; nothing in life is more profitable for men than these.*” (Wisdom 8:7)

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- What happens when we make that determination to walk the path of God rather than live in slavery to our sensual nature?
  - The former adulterer brings joy to his family...his/her children and spouse greater security and happiness. He/she no longer “has” to deceive.
  - The former substance abuser brings hope and joy to his family and friends, as they no longer have to endure his thefts to buy drugs or booze...as he becomes a better and reliable person.
  - The abuser is no longer feared, but loved. The irascible controls his anger and gains (perhaps RE-gains) friends and family.
  - There is simply nothing NOT good which comes from adhering more closely to God in all things. Most especially, eternal life.
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  - Mastery over the self-ISH whims of the body elevates and promotes the self-LESS joy of the soul.

- But now...today...is the time to change. As Jesus warns us, tomorrow may be too late. Salvation is that unscheduled train that comes only once, so we must always be in the station.
- ...for, as the old saying goes: the road to Hell is paved with good intentions.
- Yet...the road to Heaven is underlain with faith and hope in Jesus Christ...paved not with good intentions, but with devotion, obedience and good works.
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- Yes...Jesus warns us it is a hard road...contrary to the ways of the world...wearying in always having to swim upstream against the cultural current.
- But look to the destination rather than to the road...and know that our eternal rest, joy and love reside at the end of our journey...
- ...again, remembering the book of Wisdom: *“Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his elect, and he watches over his holy ones.”* (Wisdom 3:9)
- So let us spend our years well and according to the good, that we may hear in that unknown day and hour: *“Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world...”* (Matthew 25:34)

Reading 1

[Dn 12:1-3](#)

In those days, I Daniel,  
heard this word of the Lord:  
"At that time there shall arise  
Michael, the great prince,  
guardian of your people;  
it shall be a time unsurpassed in distress  
since nations began until that time.  
At that time your people shall escape,  
everyone who is found written in the book.

"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;  
some shall live forever,  
others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace.

"But the wise shall shine brightly  
like the splendor of the firmament,  
and those who lead the many to justice  
shall be like the stars forever."

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11](#)

**R. (1) You are my inheritance, O Lord!**  
O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup,  
you it is who hold fast my lot.  
I set the LORD ever before me;  
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.  
**R. You are my inheritance, O Lord!**  
Therefore my heart is glad and my soul rejoices,  
my body, too, abides in confidence;  
because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld,  
nor will you suffer your faithful one to undergo corruption.  
**R. You are my inheritance, O Lord!**  
You will show me the path to life,  
fullness of joys in your presence,  
the delights at your right hand forever.  
**R. You are my inheritance, O Lord!**

Reading II

[Heb 10:11-14, 18](#)

Brothers and sisters:

Every priest stands daily at his ministry,  
offering frequently those same sacrifices  
that can never take away sins.

But this one offered one sacrifice for sins,  
and took his seat forever at the right hand of God;  
now he waits until his enemies are made his footstool.

For by one offering  
he has made perfect forever those who are being consecrated.

Where there is forgiveness of these,  
there is no longer offering for sin.

Gospel

[Mk 13:24-32](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:

"In those days after that tribulation  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
and the stars will be falling from the sky,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

"And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds'  
with great power and glory,  
and then he will send out the angels  
and gather his elect from the four winds,  
from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.

"Learn a lesson from the fig tree.  
When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves,  
you know that summer is near.  
In the same way, when you see these things happening,  
know that he is near, at the gates.  
Amen, I say to 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 of that day or hour, no one knows,  
neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father."