

Ordinary Time 33B 2015

He Will Come Again

Every week when we recite the creed, we proclaim that Christ will come to judge the living and the dead, and we say that we look forward to the resurrection of the dead. In doing this, we profess our profound trust and hope in God. We proclaim that the future, the only future that really counts, belongs to God. In the face of evil and oppression, we profess that in God's way and in God's time, God will be victorious. God will be triumphant. We do not know how. We do not know when. But we are confident that the powers of sin and death will not be triumphant. We are filled with hope because we believe Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead. We believe that just as God raised Jesus from the dead, so God will raise us from the dead if we are faithful to Christ.

The prophet Daniel speaks about the resurrection of the dead in today's first reading when he writes, "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." Jesus speaks of his second coming in today's gospel when he says, "then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory." At that moment, Jesus will gather all the faithful from the ends of the earth into the kingdom, and all will be well.

As we remember the faithful departed during this month of November, there are moments when we ask what has happened to them. Will we see them again? For those without faith, the answer is surely "no." But for us who believe in the resurrection of the

dead and the return of Christ at the end of the ages, the answer is a resounding “yes.” Yes, we will see them again—we will see them in Christ. Yes, they are alive—they are alive in Christ. For those who believe, death is not the end but the beginning. It is the entrance into a new kind of life we will not understand until we enter it. And even then we will not fully understand it because it is the very life of God.

Jesus assures us that he will come again to gather us into God’s kingdom. When this will happen, we do not know. How this will happen, we do not know. But we do know that in God’s plan of salvation all things will be fulfilled in Christ. We do know that in God’s plan nothing can separate us from God’s love for us and our love for God. We know that at the end of our life and at the end of the ages, God will be victorious and all will be well. God will even be victorious over the power of evil that was so dramatically revealed in Paris this past week. Not even that kind of evil will not stand because God’s love is stronger than the power of hatred and death.

In a few moments we will receive the Eucharist, and when we do we will live in Christ; and Christ will live in us. But there is more. When we receive the Eucharist we will be united with all who have gone before us and are now in Christ. This is what we mean by the communion of saints. In Christ we are united with the faithful departed, and the faithful departed are united with us. In Christ we will see each other again.

As we receive the Eucharist today, we ask God for the grace to live our lives in Christ, so that when Christ comes again, we will live in him forever.