

# The end of the world as we know it • Breaking open the word

## Readings

Malachi 3:19-20a

But for you who fear my name, there will arise the sun of justice with its healing rays.

2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

Rather, we wanted to present ourselves as a model for you, so that you might imitate us.

Luke 21:3-19

“You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed.”

You can read the full text of this Sunday’s readings here:

[Scriptures for the Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C](#)

## Reflection

This time of the year we have the double whammy of the month of November being the month that we pray for the dead and the time that we are winding down the liturgical year and gearing up for Advent. This means that we hear a good deal about the end of the world; the Second Coming of Jesus. Why? Because preparing for Christmas is preparing our hearts for Jesus to be born into them anew, but it’s also preparing our hearts for his Second Coming. However, we are not afraid of endings—we look forward to what they bring—new life.

The first reading is a warning to evildoers. God will bring justice and they will be on the wrong side of it. This is useful to remind us how we should be behaving, and to give us hope that while we are working for justice, so is God. We're on the same team. And we are promised that the "sun of justice"; the light that God brings to us (Jesus) will bring healing from all of the injustice on earth.

The second readings is a warning to lazy people who are getting into other people's business. They want everyone to cater to them, but are not willing to contribute to the welfare of the community—and *everybody* has *something* to contribute (not necessarily material contribution). Paul tells them to, "work quietly and to eat their own food." It's good advice. If you are not going to be helping, don't be hindering. Don't cause trouble.

In the Gospel, Jesus warns that the end will, at some point, arrive. It is important to note here, that nobody knows when that is. The people wanted a sign—something that would tell them that the end was near. Jesus said, no. Every time something bad happens, you'll always have some folks saying "Oh! It's the end of the world!" Jesus says that that stuff has always been happening and will continue to happen, so don't look for signs in natural disasters or even human-engineered disasters. We will continue to struggle with the things of this planet and he will come when it's time. But, as we are told in the first reading, it's not something to get upset about if we are doing what we're supposed to.

## **Break open the word with your family**

### **Kids**

Paul tells us that everybody has something to contribute to the community (or your family, or your friends). What do little kids have to contribute? What do parents have to

contribute? What do old people have to contribute? What do sick people have to contribute?

## **Teens**

We actually pray for Jesus to come back and end the world in a few different prayers. This week, take a look at the Our Father and the Nicene Creed. Can you find those sentiments in there? Why do you think they are included? What does God want our attitudes toward death to be?

## **Adults**

The Gospel mentions that many followers of Jesus will be handed over to their enemies by family and friends. Have you ever felt like you were thrown under the bus, or dismissed, or treated badly because of your relationship with God? Have you ever suffered the consequences of doing justice? If so, how did you respond?

## **A little lectio**

The ancient practice of prayerfully reflecting on bits of Scripture is known as *lectio divina*. Want to try it out with your family? Head over to [Lectio Divina for Kids](#) to find out how to adapt this prayer practice for your kids.

## **A little Bible study**

Want to do a little Bible study with your kids? Here are some tips:

- During Ordinary Time, the Church pairs the Old Testament and New Testament readings in a way that each sheds light on the other. Ask your kids to look for the common theme connecting the two readings. (Sometimes it's

obvious, sometimes it is subtle.) How does the “dialogue” between the readings help you understand them better?

- Get a New American Bible, Revised Edition, and take a look at the footnotes for these readings. How do they change your understanding of what is going on?
- Take a look at the context for the readings—what happens before, or after?
- Read the NABRE’s introduction to the book of the Bible that the readings are taken from. How does that help you understand the readings?
- If you don’t have a copy of the NABRE at home, you can view it online at the USCCB website at the [Daily Readings](#) web page.

For even more resources for breaking open this Sunday’s readings, head over to [The Sunday Website](#).