

This Product Will Last Forever....Really?
Thirty-third Week of Ordinary Time – Luke 21: 5-19

Most of us want to purchase quality products that will last a long time. We believe that to be the frugal and wise we invest in things that give us the most for our money. In fact, it isn't too hard to be taken up with the notion that if we purchase quality... well it might last a lifetime... or maybe longer... maybe forever...really?

Advertisers spend big bucks to get us to consider whether their lifetime warranty product is where we will spend our cash. This goes to everything from doors and windows, to the metal roof on our home and appliances. The question I have today is: How do we define forever?

Jesus takes this on in the gospel this week. The temple in Jerusalem was the focal point of worship and sacrifice for the Jewish People. **“While some people were speaking about how the temple was adorned with costly stones and votive offering, Jesus said, “All that you see here- the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down.”**

Here Jesus is referring to the impending destruction of the temple that Herod had built after the destruction of Solomon's temple. The temple was the place where God was present. Its beauty and majesty reflected the extreme importance of the temple as a holy place for the Hebrew people.

Jesus takes aim at putting too much emphasis on the material world. Jesus' aim is at a higher and eternal world, the Kingdom of God, which is beyond the constructs of our imagination. He warns humanity not to fear those things that false prophets will predict as the end of the world. For Jesus, the conflicts and destruction that we might experience are not signs of the end. In fact, Jesus says, these are natural occurring aspects of the material world in which we live.

Rather, Jesus calls us to the opportunity to proclaim and share our faith, confident that God will provide us the means to accomplish this task. **“Remember, you are not to prepare your defense beforehand, for I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute. You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death.”**

As we wind down this liturgical year, we are called by Christ and by His Church to be mindful that nothing (including our own life) lasts forever. The only thing that lasts is the eternal life with God. Persecution and rejection, parallel to Jesus' passion, will be something we will endure. Jesus' final words this week speak the truth of our baptismal call to proclaim Christ. **“You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives.”** This is what lasts forever: faith in God, life in Christ, eternal life in heaven.

Blessings!

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