

**Pastoral Reflection: 11/13/22**

Today's readings seem apocalyptic.

Malachi prophesies

"...the day is coming, blazing like an oven,  
when all the proud and all evildoers will be stubble....  
But for you who fear my name, there will arise  
the sun of justice with its healing rays."

And Jesus in the gospel prophesies of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem saying,  
"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."

Asked when this will happen, Jesus responded that in the end times there will first be false  
messiahs, earthquakes, famines and plagues and signs coming from the skies.

And then terrible persecution of those followers of Jesus.

But, in spite of the gloom and doom, Jesus concludes with comfort that

"not a hair on your head will be destroyed.

By your perseverance you will be safe."

I am writing this reflection on November 8, the day of the long-anticipated midterm elections. I  
do not know the outcomes yet, so I have a few moments of calm. I do not even want to watch  
the news, since it breaks into my peace with its feverish pitch. Rather, I am grateful to have a  
time out to ground myself in the words of today's readings.

What do I draw from them?

Things might be bad out there, really bad.

The Temple, with the Holy of Holies is going to be destroyed. But in the end, our God is bigger  
than that. God's Holy of Holies can never be totally destroyed because the place where God  
resides is within us. And that Temple will never be destroyed. It will last forever.

Can we hold on to that hope, that belief, that when everything around us is falling down (so it  
seems) can we ground ourselves in the hope of God's promise of redemption and eternal  
life? The midterms will pass. There may even be a false messiah, or two or three, that come  
from them. But our God reigns.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

—Cathy Hartrich