

Friday of the 34th Week in Ordinary Time, November 27, 2020
(Rv. 20:1-4, 11-21:2; Lk. 21:29-33)

It's a fairly common occurrence in the lives of elderly people that they wrestle with the question, "Why am I still here?" It's especially common in the lives of people who have become widowed after 50 or 60 years of marriage and they really don't see why God would not take them to be with him and their loved ones. They are so ready for the life of the world to come that it's hard for them to discover a compelling argument on God's part that would warrant the long days and nights they have to try to fill with purposeful living.

If we encounter a younger person who is that ready to be with God, it seems out of place. We might wonder about the state of their emotional health and what leads them to prefer the life of the world to come to investing in the promise that this life holds. In such cases we might feel compelled to engage them in conversation to see if something is going on.

There must be a balance in all of this. Today's Gospel is so clear, with examples that are easily accessible (unlike the imagery of the first reading), that we know we cannot lose sight of the fact that this world is passing away, but the passing away can take place so slowly that we also know that while that is happening, we have to be busy about the life we've been given. And that calls for investment in it. But the investment cannot lose contact with the reality that it is under the law of contingency: at some point we have to let go of it for the sake of something greater.

Whenever we catch ourselves saying something like "I thought that would have lasted longer" or "let's do this from now on" we need to be careful. That's not the way the world works. Better is the approach to appreciate what is for as long as it is and when it is no longer to be ready for the new thing God is bringing into being and embrace it. That's part of moving forward on the journey of faith that God keeps calling us to.