

30<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time- Cycle C 2007

Homilies are aids to encountering the living Word.

Please read the scripture passages that this homily hopes to explore.

[Malachi 3:19-20a](#); [2 Thessalonians 3:7-12](#); [Luke 21:5-19](#)

The readings can be found at: <http://www.usccb.org/nab/111807.shtml>

“Do not be terrified.”

Did you hear this short line in our Scriptures among all those other lines that spoke about evil doers becoming stubble and being set on fire?

all the descriptions of wars, famines and plagues?

all the talk about being hated, being handed over and some of us being put to death?

Yeah, but of course remember, “Don’t be afraid”.

I might be killed, but don’t worry, “not a hair on my head will be destroyed.”

Well, right about now, I’m not worried so much about my hair as much as all the other stuff.

This is Heaven and Hell stuff, but “Don’t be terrified.”

So why is God sharing with us all of these terrifying predictions and asking us not to be terrified?

Is this some kind of divine mind game? Is He messing with us?

Well, I started to get a little annoyed with God until I realized I used to do something like this myself.

When I was a Crime Prevention Officer, I used to help organize Neighborhood Watches and give personal safety presentations.

I taught folks the 3 A’s: Aware, Alert & Act.

First, they needed to be **aware** that they could be a crime victim, anywhere at anytime.

Crime was not just something that happened on a particular side of town or to just particular people.

I gave them all the stats and stories that shook their comfort zones.

My examples were pretty sobering and scary.

I then taught them skills, so that they could be **alert** to the danger signals that so very often precede a crime.

And then I would empower them to **act** upon their knowledge.

These people had earlier found their sense of safety by suppressing their sense of danger with denial.

I had enlightened them about the realities of crime which scared them to their heebie-jeebies.

But they were taught appropriate skills and then came out empowered **feeling more secure than when we had begun.**

They could choose to do something about their crime risk.

They could choose to be safer.

The God who reduces the proud and evildoers to stubble and sets them on fire is the same God who is the **sun** of justice with its healing rays.

That sun of justice is s. **u.** n.

There is nothing hotter than the sun.

It is all the **same** heat.

So why are some reduced to stubble by this heat and others are healed?

Why are we to be afflicted with apocalyptic terror and yet we are not to be terrified?

The difference is not in how God acts.

He is constant.

The difference is in how **we** choose.

As scary as these apocalyptic prophecies are, we have been experiencing their reality for the 2000 years since they were uttered.

Are you **aware** that you can choose a life with God and that a choice not to will be respected by a rejected God?

What would existence be like, here on earth or even beyond our death if we did not embrace God's love?

Imagine that this is a **real** choice with **real** consequences.

Are you **alert** to God's presence?

Or are you numb to him to the point of denial?

Do you **act** and pursue a relationship with Him?

What kind of relationship could it be if it is not pursued?

Do you realize all you have to do is open your arms because God has been pursuing you in love from before all time?

Imagine that by coming here you are being embraced by God's loved ones around you.

Feel the security of His true presence when you share in him, through him and with each other here at the altar.

We **can** choose to embrace the God who loves us.

We **can** choose with hope to expose ourselves to the sun of justice with its healing rays.

In all of the terrors of this world,

we **can** find peace and even joy

with a God who **chose** to put on our skin and share our terrifying experiences with us

so that we need never be terrified again.