



SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER
ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH
CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
November 15th, 2015

Introduction to the Word:

We are in our message series called “More than Just Survive”. If you want to know what it is about...well...check out the video link below....and feel free to share it with others:



We all lead and live busy lives. We are constantly rushing from one thing to another - and in the hustle and bustle, at the end of the day - we ask ourselves: “what I am chasing?” We began by looking at the lives of the saints, and they had to make choices which led them to not just survive but in fact in three ways: **to Rest, to Resist and to Reflect** become rooted and thrive.

Warm-Up:

- What do you think the word “thrive” means?
- How is more than “surviving” connected to freedom?

CALL TO PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

Leader: Everyone who belongs to the truth hears the voice of God.

Lord Jesus, You lead us to patience with ourselves and with each other: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, You awaken us to your coming each day: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, You call us to be ever mindful of your final coming: **Lord, have mercy.**

Let us pray together our Heart to Home Prayer:

*God Our Heavenly Father, we long to make our thoughts your thoughts,
and our ways your ways. As we prepare with attentive mind and open heart
to hear your Word Lord, we long to be empowered with your Spirit
so that we may bring your Word to our families, our parish and our communities.
This, our prayer, we make through the intercession of Our Lady of the Visitation and in name of
Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION TIME (45 minutes)

(Please select one person –not including the leader – to take a turn at reading the scripture passages below.)



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FIRST READING (Daniel 12:1–3)

At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of these who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING (Hebrews 10:11–14, 18)

Every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, “he sat down at the right hand of God,” and since then has been waiting “until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet.” For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. Where there is forgiveness of sin and lawless deeds, there is no longer any offering for sin.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL (Mark 13:24–32)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus spoke to his disciples about the end which is to come: “In those days, after the time of suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

“Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. “Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

(Allow a few minutes for quiet and for a brief reflection on a meaningful word or thought)

COMMENTARY:

[Your group may wish to listen again to the Audio of the Lord’s Day Message](#)



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[At this point please use the video Message for this series – Week # 2](#)

On the Feast of All Saints we began our Message Series because we can all agree that we live in an era of busyness - hustle and bustle.

- we seem to be chasing - but chasing what?
- we seem to be after something - but after what ?
- we seem to be seeking something - but seeking what?

These questions have been leading us as we try and figure out where we are rooted and this is where the Saints came marching in, because they helped us remember that we are a child of God - and there is the point from which our dignity comes and from there we seek to:

- Rest in the Lord
- Resist the World
- Reflect God

Those three branches are the place where we have been springing from and last week we looked at Resting in the Lord, which means to relying on Him that our [“Good, Good Father”](#) who is Good all the time - even in moments where the tensions, trials and troubles of life call us to groan our way through. In that Groan (as the two widows in Scripture last week showed us) that we find Glory - through the **Groan we Find Glory!**

As we arrive at this week and the call to resist the world we are overwhelmed at times with what we see. We are in a chapter of our world history (much like where our culture of the first reading in the Book of Daniel) which forgets the dignity of others, the sacredness of life, where human life is stolen and vanishes with one explosion after another. The Book of Daniel reflects on a particularly terrible time for the Jewish people as they undergo persecution under King Antiochus IV, in the middle of the second century B.C. They appealed to God – now what?

We can too. Can we ever, especially as we see despair, destruction and worldly distraction all around us. But this is when the powerful words of Christ in our Gospel come forth and we must remember that all else will pass away but God’s word will not pass away. This leads us to say that our focus must be not on being defined by the world – but defined by the Lord and thus we must be a people who “Coram Deo” – seek His face! We must not be defined by the world but rather defined only by [“Good, Good Father.”](#) We are made for Joy and our Hearts long for happiness Coram Deo – seek His Face!

This resisting of the world is what gives us true freedom – it is what makes us free. Not a sublime following of the glitter of this world, or the glamour of distraction. We must choose freedom and that comes from Coram Deo. Walk with God, Open Doors to Him in your life, Have His Heart and you will see that life will become so much more than just surviving, but thriving!

Message this week – Coram Deo – seek His Face. Resist the World, do not be defined by the world – seek His Face. Coram Deo!



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(Allow about 5 – 10 minutes for the participants to react to the **Commentary** to identify a newly discovered insight or idea.)

Questions for Reflection and Discussion: (15-20 minutes)

Mark 13:29 “*You will know that he is near, at the very gates*”

- a) When do you sense the Lord’s nearness? Are you most apt to find it in an extraordinary event or in a tiny whispering voice? Do you find God more typically *in your pain* or *in your joy*? Remember - through the **Groan we Find Glory!**

Mark 13:31 “*Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away*”

- a) Are the words you “hear” most frequently from Jesus, mostly *welcoming* words or *threatening* words?

The world is a strange place at times. Events disturb us. As you seek to rest in the Lord and resist the definitions of the world – where do you find calm in your life?

Remember to use the three questions from our video

- *Where do I need more calm in my life? (Seek His Face)*
- *How can I connect more in my life with God and others?*
 - *Who do I need to cherish more in my life*

All of these bring us to not be defined by the world but rather to seek His Face. (Coram Deo)

Closing Prayer (15-20 minutes)

(This time is reserved for quiet prayer as well as for an action-response to the communal reflections. The intent is to “outreach” to the larger community.)

GROUP PRAYER COMMITMENT

- The Red Stocking Campaign and Kindness Counts Campaign will begin later this month – how will your group be involved?

Group Action:

As a group conclude your time, or commit to time before the Blessed Sacrament in our Adoration Chapel. Pray for peace in your hearts, in your homes and in our world. Remember Eucharistic Adoration never replaces the “source and summit” of who we are – the Eucharist – but it available in [our Chapel 24 hours per day. Discover it and pray there often.](#)

Spend some time listening again to [“Good, Good Father”](#)

- What parts of the lyrics jump out at you? Why? Are there some this week that you “heard” any different than last week?



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Looking for More:

Consider the following background and resources as follow ups for your group, or individually

- “**The Francis Effect**” an evening learning about the inspiration and message of Pope Francis. Our special guests will be from Salt and Light Television – this coming Monday, November 23rd at 7:00pm – mark the date and come as a group.

Let us pray - (together)

In every generation, O God, your purpose presses on toward fulfillment.

Near indeed is the one whose words will not pass away.

Ready us to face whatever anguish attends the accomplishment of your will for creation.

As you gather your elect from the ends of the earth,
count us also among those whose names are written in the book of life.

This we ask through Jesus who was, who is and who is to come:

who lives and reigns with you, at one with Holy Spirit,

God for ever. Amen.

With hands and hearts united in gratitude for God’s favors on us today, we pray that all those in our influence be moved to be open to your Word and your Spirit, while we pray united as one,

OUR FATHER...

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