

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES
November 17, 2019
The Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Malachi 3:19–20a † 2 Thessalonians 3:7–12 † Luke 21:5-19



Reflection by: Sister Patricia Wormann, OP

On visiting an elderly friend of mine, he told me he no longer watches the news. He commented that he used to watch the 11:00 PM news before he went to bed but in recent times all it did was give him nightmares. “The world is going to pot,” he exclaimed.

As we look around our world and see the structures, beliefs and events in our society whether they be political, environmental, governmental, Church or even just the relationships we have with each other, I think we would be tempted to agree with him. People will often ask, “Is this the end of the world?” When we see our earth and issues with climate change, our government—where politics becomes more important than the common good, our Church—where division and sin mar the beauty of the gospel, and in our own relationships—where violence and greed take precedence over love, peace and forgiveness, we could think that to be true.

I expressed that concern to a friend of mine some years ago. His response was simply, “Our world is always ending.” When we lose a loved one, leave a ministry, move to a new place, marry, begin a family, retire, or start a new position, our world as we knew it has ended. Whenever there is change, whether for better or worse, we leave behind what has been. We are in a new place, a beginning. Oftentimes we find these moments difficult; maybe we even experience regret or sorrow. But Jesus reminds us it is not the end. Rather we are invited to preserve and find new opportunities, growth and, hopefully, wisdom. In the gospels, Jesus tells us at least 70 times “Do not be afraid.” We are never alone. He walks with us and promises that there is always new life. Our “Abba, Father” holds us close.