

MONDAY

22 NOVEMBER

Daniel 1:1-6. 8-20

Canticle:

Bless the Lord

Luke 21:1-4

TUESDAY

23 NOVEMBER

Daniel 2:31-45

Canticle:

Benedicite 1-3

Luke 21:5-11

WEDNESDAY

24 NOVEMBER

Daniel 5:1-6. 13-14.

16-17. 23-28

Canticle:

Benedicite 4-5

Luke 21:12-19

THURSDAY

25 NOVEMBER

Daniel 6:12-end

Canticle:

Benedicite 6-8a

Luke 21:20-28

FRIDAY

26 NOVEMBER

Daniel 7:2-14

Canticle:

Benedicite 8b-10a

Luke 21:29-33

SATURDAY

27 NOVEMBER

Daniel 7:15-27

Canticle:

Benedicite 10b-end

Luke 21:34-36

REFLECTION

We begin this week by meeting the poor widow who puts just a couple of coins into the Temple treasury. Jesus notices her; he notices what she gives, her clothes, her face and her general demeanour. And he knows that she has given all that she can afford, possibly more. We sense that his compassionate heart goes out to her.

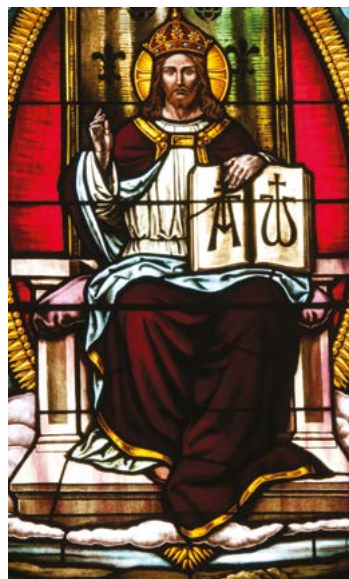
We perhaps need to hold on to that image of Jesus caring for each of us, knowing our individual needs and circumstances and honouring us when we give to God all that we can give of ourselves.

This is an image we might need when we face up to catastrophic events in our world: when we're frightened by what we see around us and when the future is horribly uncertain and threatening; when our faith is challenged and it feels like the earth is opening up underneath our feet.

In the midst of whatever noise and clamour is going on around us, let's listen to the still small voice of God within us saying, "not a hair of your head will perish"; and trust in the one who can save our souls.

PRAYER

God our Father,
 help us to hear the call of Christ the King
 and to follow in his service,
 whose kingdom has no end;
 for he reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, one glory.



Church of St Mary, New Trier, Minnesota.
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BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

PART XXXIX – MALACHI – A REMINDER TO BE WHOLE-HEARTED IN FAITHFULNESS

Georgina Byrne concludes our book-by-book series about the Old Testament.

"For you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings." (Malachi 4:2)

What is the final message of the Old Testament? How does the last of the prophets prepare us for what is to come? Malachi reminds us of what we already knew: that the worship of God should be whole-hearted, not half-hearted.

"Malachi" is the name given to this book, but the name means "my messenger", so this could be someone real or an "everyprophet". From the reference to a "governor" of Judah (1:8), the prophecy can be dated to the period after the exile, after the time of Haggai and Zechariah, when Judah was ruled by governors, not kings.

The books of Haggai and Zechariah presented an optimistic vision of the rebuilding of the Temple. Malachi reveals that religious observance has grown lax. Nothing is particularly bad – apart from hints of marital infidelity (2:3-16) and corruption – but the prophet is dismayed that religion has lost its spirit, its heart. The priests and the people have stopped caring about God and the covenant.

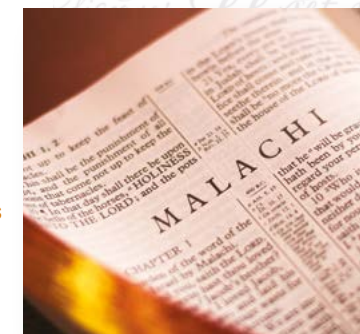
In response, Malachi challenges them to do better: to offer the best sacrifice to God, rather than what will suffice; to give the best tithe; to remember the teachings of Moses and to look for Elijah. Most importantly, Malachi returns to the covenant. "I have loved you, says the Lord" (1:2), "Return to me, and I will return to you" (3:7). God has been faithful and waits for the people's faithful commitment.

Malachi's prophecy takes us back to Moses and Elijah, but is also a vision for the future. A messenger is coming, says God, heralding the sudden arrival of the Lord in the Temple (3:1-4). Then the people will be refined like silver and the worship will be pleasing to God. Christians instinctively recognise Christ in the Temple with his parents (Luke 2:22-38), but Malachi's message is timeless: our God is faithful, so give to God your whole heart and your best worship.

LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by Caroline Hodgson and Heather Smith



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Week next before Advent
 Christ the King

Monday 22 November to
 Saturday 27 November
 2021