

33rd Sunday OT – Luke 21:5-19

“End of Times”

Jesus warned of false prophets, famines, wars, and persecutions. Even between the time of Jesus and Luke writing his gospels, examples of all of these are known to us from the Acts of the Apostles.

There was the false prophet Simon in Samaria in Acts 8, and the false prophet Bar-Jesus in Cyprus in Acts 13. Agabus had prophesied the famine that affected the whole world in Acts 11. Christians had fled Jerusalem because of persecution in Acts 8, etc. Wars and troubles of the year 69 in which four emperors struggled for office, would be familiar to Luke’s readers. Such upheavals take place in every age including our own.

These were the conditions of life in the age of the Church. Jesus prepared his disciples for them by his teaching on his way to Jerusalem. Then *he promised them the assistance of the Holy Spirit* when brought before the courts; and now *he promised his own help*. He had warned them of family divisions that his mission of fire upon the earth would cause; such divisions might end in death. He had himself shown them the way of **prayer** and **watchfulness**. If they persevered, they, like the seed in the good soil, would bear much fruit by their patient endurance.

Prayer and *Watchfulness* should be the daily routine of every Christian. There are no days off from both. Whether we join a group to pray together once a week or once a month, besides attending the Eucharist on Sundays, we still have the rest of the week for our daily prayer and watchfulness routine. Both Prayer and Watchfulness can take many different forms and styles. It is important to know what form or style that fits you as an individual.

In formation work even in Africa, we would have the young men and women when the program was together with other orders, to take the Myers Briggs Personality Inventory. I use the word “Inventory” and not “Test” since that is exactly what it is, an inventory of personality traits that affect us in how we interact with others, but also in prayer. What are some of these personality traits? Simply put without going into detail, there are four sets with the first being Introvert/Extrovert, the second lets us know how we are between being more of a Thinker or a Feeler, third give us a range in whether we are more of

a Sensate or an Intuitive, and the last how we view the world through the eyes of a Judger or a Perceiver.

None have a negative connotation but only shows us how our personality works. How does this pertain to prayer? Simply because there are many styles and forms of prayer that **may** or **may not** be *our style*, that is, may not fit our personality. For example, Contemplative Prayer may not be the ideal way to pray for some, especially for the extrovert person who may also be sensate. The extrovert and sensate are people who are outgoing and not good at sitting alone in a room with their eyes closed, especially if there are other people around and it is a nice day to go outdoors.

When we put these combinations together there can be many personality traits that may match the many specific prayer traits that are out there. If you are having trouble trying to pray, maybe you are using a style or form that does not fit your personality. Certainly there will be dry times or times where prayer seems more like sitting in a desert, but those are rare, especially at the beginning of someone starting out to pray daily.