Commentary to the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

COURAGE, LIFT UP YOUR HEAD!

Introduction

In times of political upheavals wars, famine and pestilence follow suit. The situation of misery becomes intolerable. Rumors spread easily about the end of the world. To give credit to their ranting, the followers of the fundamentalist sects refer to some biblical texts. The most cited is this: "There will be difficult times in the last days. People will become selfish, lovers of money, boastful, conceited, gossips, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy. They will be unable to love and to forgive; they will be slanderers, without self-control, cruel, enemies of good, traitors, shameless, full of pride, more in love with pleasures than with God" (2 Tim 3:1-4). We encounter these uncomfortable situations in every age so those who want to make predictions about the end of the world do not have difficulty to establish the dates. And this is what the Jehovah's Witnesses do.

For the authors of the New Testament the last times are not the ones coming in millions of years, but those in which we are living, the one initiated with Easter. It is not easy to understand the meaning of what is happening in recent times. Our eyes are veiled, clouded. Too many realities are shrouded in mystery: misfortunes, inexplicable absurdities, contradictions and signs of death. It is difficult to discern a plan of God in all this.

Using apocalyptic language and images, Jesus wants to remove the veil that prevents us from seeing the world through the eyes of God. When he seems to announce the end of the cosmos, he is not

referring to the end of the world, but helping us to understand the end of the world. Apocalypse does not mean catastrophe, but revelation, unveiling. We need the words of Christ to illumine us and, among the scribbles drawn by people, to let us see the features of the masterpiece that God is painting.

To internalize the message, let us repeat:

"Lord, stay close to me, I place my hope in you."

Fr. Fernando Armellini