



Where would you go if the world was ending? What would you do? The last decade has seen a rise in doomsday prepping, the marketing of survival techniques, and a sea of products designed for you to weather the apocalypse. “The days will come when there will not be left a stone

upon another that will not be thrown down,” Jesus warns in today’s Gospel. On the one hand, he is referring to the literal downfall of the city of Jerusalem. Indeed, many of his prophecies here have come true over the last few millennium. Nations have indeed risen against nations, kingdoms against kingdoms. Surf any world news website today alone, and you will see stories of “powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues.” Jesus’ advice to his disciples, however, isn’t to build a bunker. It’s to persevere in faith ... which won’t be easy.

“They will seize and persecute you ... you will be handed over ... you will be hated because of my name.” This warning, too, has come to pass in the Church throughout history in state sponsored persecutions and martyrdoms. Jesus is the Messiah, but his first coming was not a coming of earthly victory. Any disciple of his can expect a challenge. The coming of Christ didn’t disrupt our free will. Evil still exists and sometimes even appears to triumph. This does not mean God has abandoned His people!

Jesus reminds the disciples and us of his constant presence. “I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking.” In other Gospel passages, Jesus promises and sends the Holy Spirit upon his followers. The presence of God is real in our lives, no matter what trials come our way. It’s tempting to be distracted or dismayed by natural destruction and moral evil in the world. But the Church has weathered greater storms. The sacredness of the human person endures. We can have hope! This day and every day, we can persevere in hope and trust in God.