

How's your week been? Anything exciting?

My week began (with mask and proper distancing) at Mass at St. James with the Confirmation of seven of our youth. What a great occasion! I felt blessed to be part of that celebration. These young people are the future of the Church and hope for society! If anyone is going to change the world, they are. And they seem ready for that!

On Tuesday there was the national election. This was a long-awaited and painfully campaigned event, especially in the media. As I write this days later, the election isn't over yet. There are still votes to be counted and ballot issues to be sorted out. It takes time. At least we got to take part in the governing of our state and nation. We may not like every outcome, but that comes with the territory. It is working together going forward that will make a lasting difference.

On Friday there was a gathering along Troost. People were invited to stand in solidarity and prayer for unity and peace. Our nation and the world -indeed, even our Church- could benefit from a strong unity of purpose, peaceful relationships and dialogue among all.

Now we come to this Sunday. We are nearing the end of the Church year. The readings focus on preparation for "the end times." It makes sense to remember that what is said concerning the ultimate end-times is also applicable to our own personal "end" on this earth. And there are other "end times" as well - of a group, a nation or a society. There is transition from the past to the future; moving from one way of living to another; facing the death of "life as we knew it" and moving on. All of these transitions have things in common that we experience again and again in our lives.

Jesus' message in this Sunday's gospel (Matthew 25:1-13) is "have foresight." The virgins entrusted with greeting the bridegroom had the opportunity to prepare and be ready. Some didn't do it. They fell asleep until the time came. Then it was too late. They missed their opportunity. Jesus says, "Stay awake for you know neither the day nor the hour." And be sure you have oil for your lamps!

The election is coming to a conclusion. The time for moving together in unity and peace is upon us. Are we prepared? Do we have what we need? Are we awake and ready to do our part? That challenge is right here and right now.