

## **Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Nov 27th 2018**

As we near the end of the liturgical season, our readings take on an apocalyptic flavor - sharp sickles, fire, God's fury, wars, false prophets, insurrections, powerful earthquakes, famines, and plagues; not unlike today's deadlines of war, mass shootings, political unrest, floods, and the like. Yikes! Makes me want to dive beneath my covers and hide from it all. Yes, we could and that would be the easy way out, but... Jesus never said it was going to be easy and I don't think he would have wanted us to respond in this way. Remember, Jesus said that despite the terrible things happening around us that we should not be terrified for they are not signs of an immediate end. So, rather than feeling fearful and anxious, understand that God protects us by giving us the strength and resolve, what some would likely call "grit" nowadays, to persevere through difficult times. Jesus not only provides comfort and strength, but he reminds us through his teachings that our perseverance and faith will secure our lives and lead us to redemption. As many of us know, times of great challenge and difficulty often bring opportunities for renewal and growth and that is exactly what the season of advent provides – a chance to prepare ourselves for the second coming of Christ. We rejoice in the birth of Jesus and prepare, with hope, for his second coming by reflecting on and then acting upon his message - a message of kindness, compassion, justice, and love. So, as life, both good and bad, continues around us, do we hide beneath the covers or do we shake off our fears and actively live his message and secure our future in the kingdom of God?

Michael Kavan-Creighton University's School of Medicine