



Tuesday of the 34th Week in Ordinary Time



Date: Tuesday, November 25, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Daniel 2:31–45

Responsorial Psalm: Daniel 3:57–61 | **Response:** Daniel 3:59b

Gospel Acclamation: Revelation 2:10c

Gospel Reading: Luke 21:5–11

Preached at: the Chapel of Xolile Keteyi House in the Archdiocese of Durban, South Africa.

The readings today ask a simple but important question: What really lasts?

Just two days ago, we celebrated the Feast of Christ the King of the Universe. That title means more than we often realise. Christ doesn't reign only over what we see or understand. He is Lord even over the parts of the universe that confuse or overwhelm us—the black holes, as it were, in our lives. Places that pull everything inward. That distort light and silence sound. That's a strong image of what untruth can do—in us, and around us.

There are black holes not just in the sky, but in our culture, our institutions, and sometimes even in us—places where truth gets bent, fear takes over, or things fall apart. And yet we believe that Christ is King even there. Because His Kingdom lasts.

That matters as we come out of retreat. For you, the full 30 days of the Exercises; for me, a shorter time. But we've all been with Jesus in silence. We've listened to His call, walked with Him, stayed with Him in suffering, and rested in His peace. Now you enter the Fifth Week—which is the rest of life. Your tertianship will continue in this school of the heart; as you continue to pray, reflect, and grow in freedom, honesty, and trust.

The First Reading gives us a powerful image. A statue made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, and clay. It looks impressive—but it doesn't last. Its feet are weak. Then “a stone was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet... and broke them in pieces” (Dan 2:34). The statue collapses. The stone be-

comes a mountain and fills the earth (Dan 2:35). Daniel explains: “The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed... and it will stand forever” (Dan 2:44).

Commentators explain that each part of the statue is a kingdom—Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. Some rich, some strong, some vast. But none of them lasted. What looked like gold turned to dust. But then came the stone—not cut by human hands. That stone is Christ. His Kingdom is not built by power or image. And it lasts.

In the Gospel, the disciples admire the Temple—its stones and beauty. Jesus says, “The days will come when not one stone will be left on another” (Luke 21:6). He’s not trying to frighten them. He’s telling the truth. Don’t cling to what doesn’t last.

He says, “Do not be terrified” (Luke 21:9), even when wars break out, lies spread, and everything shakes. These are not the end. They’re the beginning of something deeper. And history confirms it. The Temple did fall. Revolts and famines came. False messiahs rose up. Just as Jesus said. He wasn’t giving a timeline for fear. He was showing that His words can be trusted. That even when things fall apart, His Kingdom stands.

The destruction of the Temple wasn’t just about losing a building. It marked the end of the old covenant and the start of something new. The place of sacrifice would no longer be stone—it would be Christ Himself. His body. His Church. That’s the Kingdom we belong to now. Not built by politics or force, but by mercy, truth, and love that endures.

We live in a time when it’s hard to tell what’s real. Deepfakes, spin, half-truths, image management. And we feel the pull—to bend the truth just enough to survive or to fit in. But Jesus calls us to something else. He is the stone that lasts. And He calls us to stand with Him. Not loudly, but clearly. Not perfectly, but faithfully.

The Psalm gives us that image of faithfulness. The three young men bless the Lord not from safety, but from inside the fire. Their song wasn’t sung after they were rescued, but while they were still in danger. “Bless the Lord, all you works

of the Lord... praise and exalt him forever!" (Dan 3:57). Their trust didn't come from being spared the flames, but from knowing who God is, even in the heat. May we have that same trust.

Today we remember Saint Catherine of Alexandria. According to tradition, she came from a well-educated background and stood up for truth during persecution. She's said to have debated with scholars sent to break her down, and many were moved by her words. She was eventually imprisoned and killed for refusing to deny her faith. While some parts of her story may be legendary, the Church honours her as someone who stayed rooted in truth, even when it cost her everything.

She didn't need to shout. She didn't need to win. She stayed grounded. That's the kind of witness we're called to.

As you continue in your tertianship, and I leave this retreat, we're all invited to do the same. To be steady. Honest. To recognise—and resist—the black holes: the forces that twist truth, feed ego, or protect image. To live as people who know what truly lasts. As Ignatius might say, not under the standard of pride or fear, but under the standard of Christ.

So here are three questions to take to prayer:

- Where am I tempted to protect appearances instead of living the truth?
- Where is God asking me to speak or act with honesty, even when it's hard?
- And how can my life—with and for others—point to the quiet strength of Christ's Kingdom?

And we pray—not just for ourselves—but for all who live in places of collapse: in Gaza, Sudan, Ukraine, and so many others we'll never see.

Lord, in places where truth is lost and hope pulled under—be King.

Reign in the black holes.

Shine your light where we can't.

Make us steady and faithful in a world that shakes. Amen.

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.