

Dear Beloved Parishioners, [Msgr. Mike writes:]

It seems to me we're almost ready for another "discovery." You know: the new interpretation of a scripture passage, the "final" and definitive decoding of an ancient calendar (Mexican or Persian or who-cares-what?) that will allow a small group of people to get an inordinate amount of ink or air-time or tweets because the end of the world is surely known now to the few who propose the foolishness.

I say foolishness because none of these discoveries or theories or "revelations" has ever proven correct. *Did the world come to an end—and did you and I miss it?*

Maybe it *is* foolishness in the way it is proposed: "the end of the world." But in another way, the more personal and individual way, what Jesus reports in today's Gospel, (and the caution he gives in the next breath), *is* meant as a caution to us who seem to believe that this present world will just keep on keeping-on forever.

A few years ago, I was meeting with Bishop Bradley and a few other priests, when Bishop asked each of us if we had submitted the plan for our own funeral to his office so that should I die unexpectedly the Bishop would know what to do, where to have the Mass, etc. When he came round to me with this yes-or-no question, I responded "No,". "What keeps you from doing it?" he asked. And the reply flew out of my mouth faster than I could think: "I'm not going to die."

But since then, I have begun to lose the surefootedness I have long had, and the ease and independence of driving my car. And I don't see as well as I used to at night. Which is to say, I've begun to *accept* that I *will* die. And it won't be in a place I choose, or on a day I pick. Perhaps I *should* be concerned about the "end of the world", but I'm not because I *think* Jesus will be coming for *me* before that. *That* is the unknown day and hour I think I (we) should be preparing for.

How shall we all do *that*?

God bless you. God bless us all.

Msgr. Mike with Fr. Albert

