

NOVEMBER 12, 2021  
Memorial of St. Josaphat, Bishop & Martyr  
Luke 17: 26-37

“OFFERING ONE’S LIFE FOR OTHERS.”

Life is full of surprises. When we are surprised, sometimes, it brings us anxiety and distress or joy and happiness. Surprises are something that we do not know compare to the things we knew will happen in the future. In our gospel, Jesus is saying that everything will happen for a reason and it will happen in the future, so we need to be aware, awake, and ready always. The gospel is not scaring us but reminding us.

“Giving examples of episodes from Scripture, Jesus presents the mysterious, astonishing and uncertain nature of the day of the Son of Man. Using the symbol of vultures surrounding a body, Jesus alludes to the uncertainty of this day. Since we do not know the day or the hour, we must always be prepared. The first stage of the preparation is the awareness that the coming of the Son of Man can be at any time, sometimes when we least expect it. The second stage of preparation is to have a realistic vision of life. Life is not limited to eating, drinking, making merry, and getting married, as in the days of Noah and Lot. The third stage of preparation is recognition of the value of time: Time and tide wait for no one. What is more important is to remain fully prepared for the coming of the Son of Man rather than worry about the exact time of his coming.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the message of our gospel for today: the Son of Man will come to us unexpectedly, so, we must always be prepared. Preparedness is living the present for the future. We must not focus on the end or the exact time of His coming but the ‘now’ which can be our stepping stone in the future, in our next life. Loving our neighbors, being kind and compassionate to them, forgiving to those who wronged us, and serve our brothers and sisters in need are living of today for the future. We must not be afraid if we are

---

<sup>1</sup> stories4homilies.blogspot.com

ready, do good things and follow the precepts of the Lord everyday. We have nothing to fear if our life are centered on our good relationship with God and with our neighbors.

Our saint today is St. Josaphat who “was born of schismatic parents but was baptized validly and received the name of John. In 1604, he joined the Monks of St. Basil, and changed his name from John to that of Josaphat. As a monk, he consecrated himself body and soul to the practice of every virtue, and particularly to the virtues of mercy and penance and was in a position to make secure the work for Christian unity to which he had dedicated his life. This work of consolidation, even of consecration, he achieved more by his martyrdom than by any other act, an ending to his life which he faced with enthusiasm and admirable greatness of soul. In one of his famous sermons he expressed a desire to be martyred; he prayed ardently to God for martyrdom as if it would be for him a singularly blessed gift. A few days before his death when he was warned of plots that were being laid against him, he said: ‘Lord, grant me the grace to shed my blood for the unity of the church and in behalf of obedience to the Holy See.’ On Sunday, November 13, 1623, his desire was realized. Surrounded by enemies who had gone in search of the Apostle of Unity, he went forth smiling and gladly to meet his fate. He asked them, following the example of his Lord and Master, not to harm the members of his household, and then gave himself into their hands. He was set upon and killed in a most barbarous fashion. Despite his wounds he did not cease till his dying breath to implore God's pardon for his murderers.”<sup>2</sup> He gave his life for the unity of the Church and venerated especially by the Ukrainian Catholics, and patron saint of Poland and of Belarus. He was canonized in 1867, the first Eastern saint to be canonized by Rome.

My brothers and sisters, let us always be awake and ready for the coming of our Lord everyday and like St. Josaphat, pray for unity and peace, and offer our lives in the service of our brothers and sisters. May St. Josaphat intercede for us. Amen.

---

<sup>2</sup> [www.ewtn.com](http://www.ewtn.com)