

## **The Word of God: Our Strength and Hope**

We started this month of November with the celebration of two feasts- All Saints and All Souls, which remind us of the last things that would happen in our lives- death, judgment, and verdict. These celebrations are connected to our reflection as we come close to the end of the liturgical year. The thought of the end of life may be frightening, but it is an unavoidable reality. Thus, the solution is to hang on to the word of God, which is something that would encourage and strengthen us as we face this reality.

In the same way, the readings of today, especially the first reading and the gospel, describe events of the last days. In his apocalyptic vision in the first reading, Daniel describes the events of the end times, the unsurpassed distress followed by salvation or damnation. Similarly, Jesus in the gospel describes the events of the end times. Like that of Daniel, his description is scary, but he goes ahead to give us hope and strength.

The truth remains that when we look around us, we discover in reality that nothing is constant. People are here, and soon they are no longer with us. Seasons come and gone. Generations rise and pass. The only thing that remains is God, seen in the person of Christ- the perfect image of God, the word that took flesh and is dwelling among us (Jn 1: 14), who is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrew 13:8). In him, we see everything that endures- the mercy and forgiveness of God as the second reading describes it.

Christ is our anchor. He holds us fast. Whenever we bring him into the picture of our life struggles, there is always a difference. He is not telling us to cross our fingers and wait for the last days, but he wants us to recognize him amid the good things of life. He wants us always to ask ourselves in anything if we hold firm to the only thing that lasts. He gives us words of hope to become agents of hope, encouragement, and comfort to people we live with and encounter in everyday life. Let us continue to hang on to his words of hope and strength. He is a faithful one, and he will not fail us. Amen.