

Return to the Lord

Joel 2:1, 10-13, 15-16a

Old
Testament
Story Time

In the Old Testament of the Bible, there are many books of the prophets - 18 to be exact. Amongst those, there are five Major prophets, and 13 Minor prophets. They are called this based on the size of their writings. Those who wrote extensively are called the Major Prophets, and those who only wrote a little are called the Minor Prophets.

The prophet Joel is one of the Minor Prophets. The Book of Joel consists of two speeches Joel gave to the people of Judah. The first speech is a warning to the people of a potential crisis they may all experience. Joel is deeply concerned that because the people of Judah are not living in accordance with God's laws, the Lord God will allow their harvest to be ruined, and then they won't have enough food.

In the second speech, on the other hand, the prophet Joel offers hope to the people that one day the Lord God will defeat their enemies and restore security to Jerusalem.

In the first speech, the prophet Joel spoke a great warning to the people:

“Blow the horn in Zion,
sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
for the day of the Lord is coming!”



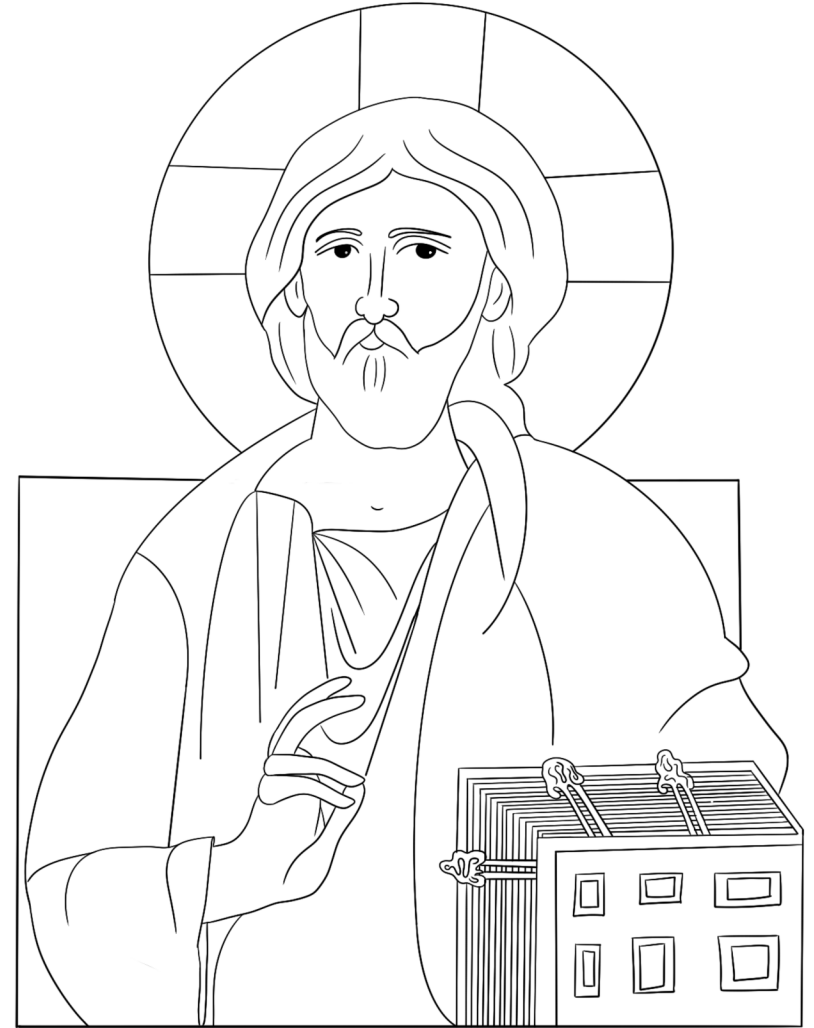
What exactly is this day that is to come? And when exactly is the day coming? The prophet Joel did not know for sure, but he knew the people needed to turn back to God in order to be ready for whatever may come.

Whatever the people will one day face, the prophet Joel urges them to prepare themselves, and most importantly to return to the Lord with their whole heart. The people are to be sanctified, meaning they must set themselves apart for God's special purpose, and be ready for the day of the Lord.



The Way of Blessed Estephan Douaihy

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“But the one who perseveres
to the end will be saved.”





Gospel Corner

Matthew
24:1-14

As Catholics, we know that God created the world and everything in it. He created people in His image and likeness and He loves us. At every moment, God is willing the world and everything in it to continue to exist.



God causes the earth to continue to spin and rotate around the sun, He continues to change nature with each season, He continues to will breath into your lungs, and gravity to keep you from floating away.

However, there will be a day when God will allow this world to pass away. He tells us this in His Word, the Bible. At the beginning of the end of the world, many terrible things will begin to happen on the earth.

Today's Gospel reading mentions that there will be wars, earthquakes, famines, persecution of Christians, and many will turn to sin rather than lives of virtue.

This all sounds kind of scary, but we don't need to fear. We don't know when the end of the world will happen, but if you are a baptized Christian then you have been filled with the grace necessary to make it through hard times.



It is important that we keep things of God in our minds and ask Him to help us make right choices. We must *want* to choose good and *want* to become saints. Jesus said, "But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved." With God's help we can persevere!

Did you know?

FOUR LAST THINGS

During the Season of the Holy Cross, the Maronite Church focuses on the Four Last Things referring to death, judgment, heaven, and hell.

These are the ultimate realities of human existence that the Church encourages us to meditate on to foster spiritual growth, repentance from sin, and to inspire a life of holiness.

What you can do

Pray and ask God to help you persevere in His will for you even during hard times.

Read children's books about saints to learn how these holy men, women, and children trusted God in their trials and temptations.



Word Jumble



Unscramble the words below and then look throughout this issue to find where they are used and circle them.

1. E E E E R S V R P _____
2. L H E L _____
3. D E N _____
4. R O U F S T A L S G I N T H _____
5. N E E V A H _____
6. A H T E D _____
7. Y H L O R C S S O _____
8. M N J D G T U E E _____
9. T Z B P A I E D _____
10. V A S D E _____