Reading for the Memorial of St Andrew Dung-Lac and companions

24th November 2026

First reading

Revelation 14:14-19

'The hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.'

I, John, looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the Temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, 'Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.' So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Then another angel came out of the Temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, 'Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.' So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 96(95):10. 11-13a. 13b-d. ℟13b

The Lord *comes to judge the earth.*

Say to the nations, 'The Lord is king.'
The world he made firm in its place; he will judge the peoples in fairness.
Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad; let the sea and all within it thunder praise.
Let the field and all it bears exult.
Then will all the trees of the wood shout for joy at the presence of the Lord, for he comes.
He comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with justice, and the peoples with faithfulness.

Gospel Acclamation

Revelation 2:10c

Alleluia, alleluia.
Be faithful unto death, says the Lord,
and I will give you the crown of life.
Alleluia.

Gospel **Luke 21:5-11**

'There will not be left here one stone upon another.'

At that time: While some were speaking of the Temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, Jesus said, 'As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.' And they asked him, 'Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?' And he said, 'See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, "I am he!" and, "The time is at hand!" Do not go after them. And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once.'

Then he said to them, ‘Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

Towards the end of the liturgical year we meet the most odd-sounding texts in the Bible, about global catastrophe and the end of the world, a literature that some find fascinating. This literature is highly symbolic and not to be taken as predicting actual events. In fact, Jesus himself says, “Beware that you are not led astray” about this theme. Probably the best way to apply it is as invitation to take responsibility for our actions, examine our motives, and be ready to come face to face with God.

It’s better to read these apocalyptic sayings as a moral tonic for ourselves than to relish the prospect of the destruction of the wicked (others who have harmed us or committed outrages in history).

They are a reminder of mortality, with an undertone of divine justice and mercy, prompting us to live the present moment with fairness and kindness towards our neighbour. While the wrath of God is mentioned we should ask for guidance from the mind of Christ, who sees to the heart of things. Guided by his spirit, we continue to look forward with hope to what God has in store for us.