

HOMILY — OT 33C, 2019
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I think it might help us appreciate these rather foreboding readings
if we look at them from the vantage point of being Catholics.

“Catholic” means universal, all embracing.

By definition, we are part of a religious tradition that:

- takes much into account,
- sees things from the broadest of perspectives
- embraces many cultures, a variety of spiritualities
- acknowledges the richness of many
political, economic, religious, philosophical perspectives.

As Catholics we have a long tradition of embracing both
“the already” and “the not-yet.”

For us, the victory is *already* won, but not *yet* over.

We Catholics have traditionally struggled mightily
to hold those two apparently opposed convictions in dynamic tension.

On the one hand, we believe the victory is ours,
yet on the other hand, the struggle goes on.

Looked at from the one perspective, the victory has been won.

We know the outcome, God has triumphed over evil.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,

God has conquered sin and death, God has triumphed over evil.

That is the “already.”

Viewed from the perspective of the here-and-now, the “not-yet,”
we continue to be caught up in mortal combat.

The struggle with evil, with sin,

with classism, racism, sexism, with greed, hatred and deceit.

All of that continues to go on.

The passion and death of Jesus is played out daily in our lives.

We are faced with crises on every side

wars, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, terrors and persecutions,
right down to cut fingers and bloody noses.

All those take place both within us and in the outer world.

Jesus insists in today's Gospel that

we must not slip into an attitude that says,

“the world's going to hell in a hand-cart.

There's nothing I can do

but defend or isolate myself and those dear to me as best I can.”

As Catholic Christians, Jesus calls on us today to continue to hold

both the "already" and the "not yet" in a dynamic tension.

We are to be those who live in the firm conviction
that Christ has conquered sin and death,
that the victory has been won.
It is that conviction, that vision, that gives us
the hope and courage to carry on.