

preached in the all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” We’d better get to work — may God help us!

Yours in Christ,



Around the Parish

Sunday, Oct. 24: Charity Fundraising Luncheon. After Liturgy that Sunday, a delicious meal will be offered to benefit our parish Charity Fund: smoked brisket, pulled pork, potato salad, Mexican corn, chocolate raspberry cake. We appreciate commitments in advance, to make enough for everyone. We also welcome orders for takeout that day! A suggested donation of \$15 is welcome. Our Charity Fund provides loving support to neighbors and to members of the parish in need.

We are preparing for our annual **Diocesan Assembly**, hosted by Christ the Savior Church, Southbury. Please pray for all of us (including several from our parish) who will be participating.

Our services in the temple are streamed via Facebook and Youtube. You can most easily find them on our website: <https://sspeterpaul.org/media> .

On Sunday, Nov. 7, we will celebrate the annual **Endowment Fund Thanksgiving and Memorial Service** at the conclusion of the Liturgy.

Rector’s Letter, October, 2021

Dear brothers and sisters:

These past many years have been full of turmoil in the country and the world. Just when we thought maybe things might get better, bad news at home and around the world presses in on us. But if it seems like we’re going through an especially disastrous time, we need more perspective. This is the way the world has run for ages. The disciples wondered about similar disasters 2,000 years ago:

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations

for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:3-14).

"Wars and rumors of wars.... Famines, pestilences, and earthquakes.... Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold..." — these are the signs of the end of the age, and we see them around us today, but so has every generation since our Lord spoke these words. So we should understand we Christians have always been living in the Last Days, we are always expecting the coming of Jesus Christ as he commanded us.

And we should also understand that, while from a worldly point of view the economy and everything else is mismanaged and spinning out of control, God still manages the divine economy with perfect understanding.

It may seem strange to speak about a "divine economy," but the Fathers do all the time. We tend to translate their words as "dispensation," "providence," or sometimes "stewardship" in English, but the original word is the same we use to speak of the realm of business, jobs and finance. "Economy" at its root means "household management." So the "household" of the United States is not very orderly at the moment. But God has ordered the "house-

hold of faith," and that economy is in very good hands. Nothing in creation is outside his purpose and "all things work together for good" (Romans 8:28).

Of course, we know that not everything seems orderly within the household of faith, either. We see confusion and scandal, and "many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another," as our Lord warned. And this, too, has always been a part of Christian history. We have had false prophets and faithless leaders, and there has never been a congregation at perfect unity with one another and with the commandments of God. Does this mean that the Church has failed in its mission, that God's plan of salvation, his "economy," has failed? Not at all.

God the Father sent his Son into the world to seek and save the lost. The Lord said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Mark 2:17). Every one of us, whether hierarch or child, comes to church in need of the Physician. We all need to grieve over the ways we have sinned against God and one another.

But we also need to take up our own responsibility. If the Church in the world does not reflect heavenly reality, I must start with myself. How am I helping to heal the world? Am I truly devoting myself to carrying out my part in God's plan of salvation? If not, what am I doing blaming anyone else?

For the mystery of God's economy is that he entrusts the daily work to us sinners. We are the stewards of his household, given the job of caring for the world until "the gospel of the kingdom will be