

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

LOOK

What landmarks guide your daily path?
Where do you look for direction?

Describe a time in your life when a storm changed the landscape. Did you lose a landmark, something you counted on as a guiding force?

BOOK

Mark 13:1-8

As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, 'Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!' Then Jesus asked him, 'Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.'

When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, 'Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?' Then Jesus began to say to them, 'Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, "I am he!" and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there

will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.'

- 1) This passage is called Mark's 'little apocalypse' (meaning 'reveal'). Jesus predicts the fall of the temple, but emphasizes that we 'should not be alarmed.' The disciples pose what follow-up question? How does their question reflect our human nature?
- 2) The people who read Mark's gospel had already seen the fall of the temple. They were displaced and persecuted. How would they have read and received this passage?
- 3) Jesus calls the upheaval to come 'birth pangs'. How does that change our understanding of this passage?
- 4) Is Jesus telling us not to build cathedrals and monuments, temples and towers? Why or why not?

TOOK

- 1) How has the pandemic and its aftermath altered your physical landscape? Your spiritual landscape? Altered St. David's?
- 2) Storms can leave us in the dark; cold; trapped; frightened. When you've been in a storm, how has God's presence been evident to you?
- 3) Storms – and pandemics - reveal the places where our roof leaks; where the gutters are clogged; shutters are loose; foundation unstable. What have the storms in your life revealed to you?
Did you decide to repair storm damage, or decide to relocate or rebuild?
- 4) Faith is not an inoculation against trouble or sorrow. What does this passage tell us about how to weather storms? What is the temple and

tower that endures? Where do we
place our trust and hope? How do
we reflect our belief in our behavior?