

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

**Heavenly Temple and Earthy Temple** Thirty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time Tuesday,  
November 22, 2016 8:15 AM **Rev 14:14-19; Lk 21:5-11** Saint Cecilia, virgin and  
martyr (The transformation of worship in Christ, the bringing of all matters inward, so that  
there's truly worship in Spirit and truth, not worship merely in shadow.)

Today there are two different images of the temple: one in the Book of Revelation, the **heavenly temple**; one in the gospel according to Luke, the **earthly temple**. This duality goes back to the very beginning. It was Moses, recorded in the Book of Exodus, who had visions of the heavenly temple, and that's where he got the idea for the earthly temple, which was originally nothing but a tent, a relatively small tent, smaller than this room. **Throughout the whole history of the people of Israel there are these two temples:** earthly temple, sometimes just a tent; heavenly temple. We see it coming forth explicitly in such works as the Book of Ezekiel, for example. We see it in the New Testament in the Letter to the Hebrews, the heavenly temple, where the high priest Christ goes. But moreover in intertestamental books, that is, neither new nor old but in between, there's all kinds of references to this heavenly temple. It is a primary concern. **The earthy one is just, if anything, a shadow of the heavenly.** And that's why Jesus is talking about the earthly, people were so amazed at how beautiful it was. And it was quite remarkable. It was a great work of architecture. But he is saying this is all going to go. It's not the real one.

Now the **Temple on earth had become as a sign of nationalism**, Jewish nationalism. That's also part of the story of it being destroyed. **Nationalism is a form of violence.** It's a sort of **ethnocentrism that undoes the well-being of a people.** And the well-being of the Jewish nation was undone by nationalism.

**Moreover Jesus himself was planning to show and to teach in his own life the kind of worship that actually pleases the Father.** It is a life of humility, of self-giving, of self-offering,

of surrender to the will of God, to the peace of God. That is the kind of sacrifice God really blesses and the kind of sacrifice that will make life on earth better because it will bring peace and concord, as opposed to war and violence. In a way, the Temple was in the way because as long **as people thought God wanted animal sacrifices, they wouldn't focus on what God really wanted.** So the death and crucifixion of Jesus is connected to the destruction of the Temple, not that they happened at the same moment, but that they both relate to the same reality: **the transformation of worship in Christ, the bringing of all matters inward, so that there's truly worship in Spirit and truth, not worship merely in shadow.**

It is our work to continue that worship in Spirit and truth. **The Eucharist** is that worship in sign. But the sign itself **is meant to address our own minds and souls and spirits and to bring us into it so that we become part of it:** "The whole Christ," as St. Augustine says, "offering the whole Christ to the Father," so we become the new and true temple.

And so, **"All that you see here—the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down."**