



WEEK 2: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2020 – 32nd Sunday

Gospel of Matthew: 25: 1-13

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

"The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

Five of them were foolish and five were wise.

The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps.

Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

At midnight, there was a cry,

'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps.

The foolish ones said to the wise,

'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

But the wise ones replied,

'No, for there may not be enough for us and you.

Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.'

While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him.

Then the door was locked.

Afterwards the other virgins came and said,

'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!'

But he said in reply,

'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Reading Wisdom 6:12-16

Reading 2: 1Thessalonians 4:13-18

INTRODUCTION

Be watchful, be wise, be ready – fill your lamps with oil (a symbol of good deeds) that will light your way to the Kingdom! An urgency to our calling as stewards of love unfolds as the Gospels and reading reflect on the end of time. Wise people make God the center of their lives and are prepared for God's unexpected coming.

If the Lord comes tonight, can we do an accounting of the stewardship of His gifts to us? Our message for the season is titled **BETTER TOGETHER**, exploring the great things God does for us and through us, and the great things we do when we bring our gifts together, as the body of Christ.

SCRIPTURE CONNECTIONS

1st READING: Wisdom 6:12-16: Wisdom is accessible to all who seek her. True wisdom is right relationship with God. Those who find wisdom will not worry over the coming of the Lord because they live in a spirit of vigilance. Those who do not seek wisdom will remain foolish and be filled with worry about many things.

- **What distinguishes wisdom from knowledge? How do they work together?**
- **How do you search for wisdom and immerse yourself in it?**
- **How can we grow in wisdom?**

2nd READING: 1Thessalonians 4:13-18: It was common thinking that people who had died before the return of Christ perished forever. Paul reminds us that the Resurrection of Christ is a beginning, that all the baptized will be raised up as Christ was. As Catholics, say that we do not know the *when, how or where* of Christ's Second Coming (echoes the Gospel). We just believe that Christ *will* return and the faithful can enjoy his presence for all eternity.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 25: 1-13: The parable in this week's Gospel is taken from Jesus' final discourse in Matthew, teaching believers to prepare for the last days. The "wise" are those who keep their lamps ready, preparing to meet Jesus by keeping his Word and pursuing an active life of good works to light their ways. The 'foolish' are those who hear Jesus' message but do not act on it.

We may criticize those who had oil for failing to share, but the focus is the call to readiness for the Lord's return. "*Stay awake for you do not know the day nor the hour.* Even if we think Jesus' return may be far, far away, the end of our earthly life may be when we least expect it.

- **Ask yourself: Have I lived on this earth if I knew it were my last day? Or week? Would my priorities shift if I knew?**
- **Check your priorities against the Great Commandment that we have been reflecting upon in the last month – have you built a life around loving God, loving neighbor, loving yourself?**
- Another way to look at that question comes from *Laudato Si'*. Pope Francis' vision of "integral ecology" and the "common good" includes justice between generations. Returning to his biblical vision, he says that "the world is a gift we have freely received and must share with others." He ends Chapter Four with the challenge, **"What kind of world do we want to leave to those who will come after us, to children who are now growing up?"**