**Homily for the 19th Sunday of Ordinary Time [C] (Aug 10-2025)**

**Readings:-Wis 18:6-9; Heb 11:1-2, 8-19; Lk 12:32-48**

**My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ;**

The central theme of today’s readings is the necessity for trusting Faith in God’s promises and vigilant preparedness among Christ’s followers to meet their God as their Judge and Rewarder, at the time of their death. Fidelity in doing God’s will is the best preparation for our death.

***“Faithful and prudent stewards*” in the parish:** Every so often there are people who want to make a spectacular gift to the Church — something big, something that can be seen and identified; usually it’s a gift in memory of a deceased loved one.  No one ever says, *“Just apply this to the budget.”*That’s understandable.  There’s nothing flashy about paying the light bill or getting the carpet clean. But there are folks in every parish who are willing to do just that: the unspectacular, the unflashy, the unnoticed things that make a big difference in the lives of the parish and the people it serves. For example, there’s the woman who is very well off who writes a sizable check to the parish every week to be used to buy gift cards at the local supermarket for poor and struggling families. And then there’s the college professor who volunteers her time every year to teach the fourth-grade religious education class.  She’d be a great addition to the adult education and RCIA programs, but she finds that teaching the kids is a great leveller in her life.  She says her rambunctious group makes her a better teacher — and a better Christian. Then, there’s the usher who welcomes parishioners to the first Mass on Sunday mornings and handles the details of hospitality.  After Mass he goes through the Church picking up bulletins from the benches, straightening out the hymnals, and making sure the rest rooms are clean for the next Mass.  He’s one of the city’s most successful and respected attorneys.  He’s always generous in giving legal help to the parish — but he shies away from taking a prominent leadership position.  No, he says, this is where the need is, and he’s happy to be able to help fill it. — We are all called to be *“faithful and prudent servants”* of the abilities and resources that the *“Master”* has entrusted to us and will hold us accountable for — not for the breadth and depth of those gifts. **(***Connections).*

**A summary of the teachings from the Readings of the Day:-** The first reading cites the Faith-filled preparedness of the ancient Hebrew slaves in Egypt before their mass exodus to the Promised Land. Their trusting Faith in their God’s promises gave them hope. We are told how their Faith and Hope resulted in their liberation. With expectant Hope, the Hebrews sacrificed the first Passover lamb and ate the first ritual meal, as prescribed by their God through Moses. They awaited their imminent release and were prepared for it. Today’s Responsorial Psalm (Ps 33) invites us to express our own confidence in God and to declare our trust in His Providence. In the Second Reading, taken from the last chapter of the letter to the Hebrews, the author defines Faith as “*the realization of what is hoped for and evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1).* He tries to bolster the Faith of the Jewish Christians (the Hebrews), by appealing to the example of their ancestors, starting with Abraham, and reviewing the things they accomplished by Faith. In the Gospel, Jesus challenges his disciples to trust the Father’s promise to give them eternal happiness in His kingdom. But they are to be prepared at all times, because the Son of Man will come at an unexpected hour, either at the moment of their death or at the end of the world, whichever comes first. Using the master-thief parable, Jesus warns us to be on our guard so that the thief (the devil), may not steal our treasure of Divine grace or our relationship with God by his temptations. Using the master-servant parable, Jesus reminds us always to do the will of God by obeying Jesus’ commandment of love and offering humble and sacrificial service to others.

**Important messages for imitation: -** 1**) We need to be vigilant and ready to face the Lord.** One of the traditional means for remaining alert is prayer. The most important element in prayer is listening to God – an attitude of attention to the “*tiny whispering sound”* of the Lord (1 Kgs 19:11-12).   Such attentiveness demands that we set aside a quiet time every day during which we can tune our ears to the Divine sounds of love, harmony, and peace. Let us recall the words of the Book of Revelation: *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him and he with me”*(3:20).

**2) We need to wait for the Lord**. *“Waiting for Christ to return*” means working for the coming of the Kingdom of God.  This includes doing God’s will by rendering humble service to others, by combating poverty, by ending the hatred that divides us, by establishing peace among individuals and nations, by curbing the pride that causes us to become confrontational, and by building social structures that respect the dignity of individual humans. We must wait for the Lord in our daily lives by learning to see Jesus in the least of our brothers and sisters.  In other words, we must be prepared to serve Jesus in whatever form he takes. What we frequently discover in “serving” other people is that God comes to us through them.

**JOKE OF THE WEEK:-1) Get ready for the Heavenly trip**.  During his sermon, an evangelist asked all who wanted to go to Heaven to raise their hands. Everyone in the audience did so–except for one elderly man sitting near the front of the auditorium. The preacher pointed his finger at him and said, *“Sir, do you mean to tell us that you don’t want to go to Heaven?”*   *“Sure, I do,”* the old man answered, *“but the way you put the question, I figured you were getting up a busload for tonight!’*

**Gospel exegesis**: **Be ready for your death and Jesus’ Second Coming:**Today’sreading from Luke 12 is one of three eschatological discourses in the Gospel. All three of the Synoptic Gospels record Jesus’ concern for his disciples as he warned them to keep alert, to keep watch over themselves with careful attention. The passage is a collection of short parables, in which the chief characters are a master (representing the risen Jesus), and his servants (Jesus’ followers). According to the Fathers of the Church, Jesus’ words in this passage have two senses. In the narrower sense, the words refer to the Second Coming of Jesus, but in the broader sense they refer to the time of our own death, when God will call us to meet Him and to give Him an account of our life on earth. Since the precise time of either coming is unknown to us, the proper attitude for Jesus’ followers is constant watchfulness. *“The secret to living out the theological virtue of Faith is to see that the here and now is the place and time in which God wants us to meet Him and to serve Him. It is not in the past, which is over. It is not the future, which we can only imagine and so is not real. The person in the state of grace who washes the dishes well, because it is his job, and who offers this work to God for the sake of his neighbour, is living out the virtue of Faith and is prepared to meet Christ.” (St. Jose Maria Escriva).*

**Relationship by grace:** In the first part of today’s Gospel, Jesus tells us what our real treasure should be and how we may keep it safe. The treasure God offers is of far greater value and is more secure than any earthly treasure.  Nevertheless, it is possible for us to lose this treasure if we do not guard it carefully.   The treasure is the Faith-relationship with God, which the Lord offers us in Baptism, a share in His own Life (Sanctifying Grace) through which we begin, here on earth, to lead our eternal life in Heaven with Him.  But this treasure can be stolen by the devil or lost by our lack of vigilance in the midst of our temptations.  Jesus uses two comparisons to explain the nature of the vigilance required of us. We must be **ready for action,** like an oriental servant, and **trimmed for service,** like an oil lamp. The long flowing robes worn by people of the day were a hindrance to work.  When a man prepared himself to work, he gathered up his robes under his girdle (belt) in order to leave himself free for activity. The reference to fastened belts and lamps burning ready (v. 35) also recalls the preparedness for action, which was legislated for Israel in the Passover ritual (Ex12:1). Just as the Israelites were to be ready to pass from slavery to freedom, so are the disciples to live in a state of alertness in order to recognize and accept the Passover which Jesus offers – from sin and death to forgiveness and life. The eastern lamp was often a cotton wick floating in a vessel of oil. The wick had to be kept trimmed at all times and the lamp replenished with oil.  Otherwise, the light would go out. What Jesus teaches us through these comparisons is that our relationship with God the Father must be constantly replenished by our prayers, our Sacramental life, our reading of Holy Scripture, and our acts of charity. Since the Lord is committed to us in an unbreakable Covenant of love and fidelity, we must, assisted by His grace, respond with equal commitment, no matter how difficult that may be. In His love for us, God always gives us the grace and the strength to remain faithful, and He will reward our faithfulness.

**Steadfast Faith and eternal vigilance:** In the second part of today’s Gospel, Jesus exhorts his followers to be steadfast in their Faith and ever vigilant. He explains his point using three mini-parables.  The servants of a master were entrusted with the management of the household. In Jesus’ day, although stewards were slaves, they had almost unlimited power.   A trusted steward ran his master’s house and administered his estate. When his master was not at home, the steward was ever-vigilant. He prepared himself for his master’s return at any time of the day or night by always doing his duties faithfully. Jesus illustrates the same point using another mini-parable of the wise servants waiting for the return of their master after a wedding feast.

Jesus teaches us the need for constant vigilance, using yet another mini-parable, that of the thief and the treasure. We should not lose our treasure of Divine grace like the man who awoke one day to discover that a thief had stolen his wealth during the night.

These parables are addressed to all believers to encourage “wakefulness” and preparedness. We must be vigilant like the servant in the parable waiting for his master’s unexpected return or like the wise homeowner who was well prepared for the unexpected break-in of a thief.   Since the time of our death is quite uncertain, we, too, must be ever ready to meet our Lord at any moment. He should find us carrying out our tasks of love, mercy, and service, rather than leaving things undone or half-done. He should also find us at peace with God, with ourselves and with our fellowmen (Eph 4:26).

**Irreparable mistakes:** Jesus then presents the parable of the unwise steward as a warning to us. The unwise steward made two mistakes.   (i) He said, *“I will do what I like while my master is away.*” Like him, we often forget that our Lord is always with us, and that we will be accountable to him on the day of reckoning. Misuse of an office for one’s own advantage or the abuse of others will bring about severe punishment, for the returning Lord will place that servant *“with the unfaithful*.”  (ii) He said, *“I have plenty of time to put things right before the master comes.”*  Nothing is as fatal to the accomplishment of a task as procrastination.  Jesus also warns us that knowledge and privilege bring responsibility with them. Today, looking back on two thousand years of Christian history, we find it difficult to expect Christ’s second coming during our lifetime. But we are sure to meet him at our death. Since the date and time of our death are also unknown to us, we should always be ready to give him an account of our lives.

**Catechism of the Catholic Church on today’s Gospel theme:**Christ calls us to anticipate his return. While we might not have the expectant fervour of the early Christians, we are to still look forward to his arrival. At the end of the world, Jesus will return to judge each one according to one’s actions and one’s faith. Then, good will definitely triumph over evil. Until that time, we represent Christ to others by our actions and our Faith. Our example, then becomes part of our anticipation. (CCC #680,  #681, #682)

Why do we look for Christ to return? In addition to the obvious, “*Because Jesus said he would come back in glory as our Judge,”* there are many other reasons. One would be our devotion to him. Another would be our return to earth after death in the *“resurrection of the dead.”* As Christians, we believe not only in life after death; we also believe that God will reunite our souls with our bodies at the end of time. At the resurrection of the body, we will have a body like Christ’s, a “spiritual body.” (CCC #1016, #1017).

**What kind of steward does God expects us to be?**God expects Christians to be accountable, faithful, productive stewards of God’s grace and His gifts to us of creation, life, body, talents, skills, wealth, and possessions. Negatively**,** in order that the Lord will find us responsible, faithful and productive stewards when he comes in glory, let us avoid some of these pitfalls and mistakes while awaiting the second coming of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour: First, complacency in that Jesus’ return is not yet imminent. Second, idlenessor  –doing nothing.  Third, gross negligence in the performance of duties. Fourth, procrastination — always postponing to another day what can be done today. Fifth, abuse of powerand position and squandering of resources. Sixth, the ***mañana***habit– starting our work, but fading away and quitting; a lack of perseverance. (The name is taken from the quip, “***Mañana***may translate to “tomorrow,” but it really means “not today!”). Positively, let us religiously perform the tasks required of us and fulfill our role as stewards of God’s gifts and graces: First, we need to protect, preserve, and conserve all Gods’ gifts entrusted to us. Second, we need to develop to the maximumall the spiritual, material, and physical resources entrusted to our care. Third, we need to communicate and shareall the fruits and benefits rising from the gifts and talents we have preserved, developed, and cultivated. Good stewards will be generously rewarded, while bad stewards will be severely punished and will suffer a great loss. The reward or punishment will be proportioned to the powers, gifts, opportunities, and knowledge of the offenders. As Scripture says: *“everyone to whom much is given, of him will much be required”;* cf. Mt 5:19-20; 7:21-22; 25:41-46; Jas 2:14. Whenever Jesus comes, will he find us responsible, faithful, productive stewards or lazy, abusive, unfaithful stewards? Can we give him a good account of our stewardship?

**Additionalanecdotes:--1. Be watchful servants:** Steven Anthony “Steve” Ballmer (born March 24, 1956) has been the [chief executive officer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_executive_officer) of the [Microsoft Corporation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft) since [January 2000](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/January_2000).  He is one of the richest people in the world with a personal wealth estimated at USD 27.7 billion in 2016, and the 35th-richest person in the world.  He is Bill Gates’ hand-picked successor. In 2004, he was seen crawling on the floor of the General Motors’ executive conference room, trying to fix a connection that would enable him to make a pitch to GM engineers. The image of the Microsoft CEO on his hands and knees to please some customers made such an impression on the author Steve Hamm that he wrote a whole article based on this one incident. [Steve Hamm, “Why High Tech Has to Stay Humble,” *Business Week*(19 January 2004), pp 76-77.] — Corporate executives will get on their hands and knees to show customers how much they care. In today’s Gospel, Jesus warns his followers to be ever prepared by doing the will of God always in their lives, as the time of their death is uncertain.

**02.“I have sent you many messengers*.”***  According to an old fable, a man made an unusual agreement with Death. He told the Grim Reaper that he would willingly accompany him when it came time to die, but only on one condition – that Death would send a messenger well in advance to warn him. Weeks turned into months, and months into years. Then one bitter winter evening, as the man sat thinking about all his possessions, Death suddenly entered the room and tapped him on the shoulder. Startled, the man cried out, *“You’re here so soon and without warning! I thought we had an agreement.”* Death replied, *“I’ve more than kept my part. I’ve sent you many messengers. Look in the mirror and you’ll see some of them.”* — As the man complied, Death whispered, *“Notice your hair! Once it was full and golden, now it is thin and white. Look at the way you tilt your head to listen to me because you can’t hear very well. Observe how close to the mirror you must stand to see yourself clearly. Yes, I’ve sent many messengers through the years. I’m sorry you’re not ready, but the time has come for you to leave.”*