

October 21, 2020 – 29th Week in Ordinary Time



**“Being armed and ever-ready to serve in the Kingdom, with a sense of responsibility and commitment!”
(Eph 3:2-12 and Lk 12:39-48)**

Most of us don't like to be taken too much by surprise. We like to think that we have a good idea of what is coming down the road and when it is coming. Yet, we know from experience that the unexpected does happen. It is that experience of the unexpected that features in the parables Jesus speaks in this morning's gospel reading.

The Gospel of the Day presents to us a strong reminder by the Lord to take our Christian life seriously with its undeniable duties and its unavoidable sense of responsibility. Jesus speaks of the coming of the Son of Man at an unexpected time just as the coming of a thief is unknown to the master of a house (Lk 12: 39-40).

What are some of the characteristics of the coming of a thief to the house? It happens in the quiet of the night so that no one becomes aware and the setting is perfectly safe.

- There is a sense of 'anonymity'. It takes place when none of the people in the house are expecting it thus leaving them completely startled and unprepared.
- There is the element of 'total surprise' It happens in areas where there is emptiness or lesser security measures. Thus, creating greater potency to danger and sharper damage.
- There is a factor of 'missed opportunity to take care'.
- These then are the "loopholes" in our spiritual life, that can cause us to be off-guard when the Lord appears in His Second Coming (just as the coming of the thief in the night). A sense of 'anonymity', An element of 'total surprise' and A factor of 'missed opportunity to take care'

- Do we remain "anonymous" to the Lord by remaining ignorant of His teachings and commandments – even though He addresses very often through the Bible and the Church? by failing to give heed to the repeated reminders by the Lord through various advice from our caring one, and the guidance we receive through sermons, reflections, messages, and life-situations?.
- Do we get caught with "total surprise" at the Will of God in our lives by failing to see the providential hand of God in the struggles and hardships that we

undergo? entering into a sense of despair and discouragement when things don't happen the way we plan?

- Do we become victims of "missing opportunities to take care" by failing to do the many good works which we can perform, but fail, owing to our slackness? by taking the stance of being indifferent in situations of injustice and discrimination?

The Lord clearly warns even in the Book of Revelation "If therefore you shall not watch, I will come to you as a thief, and you shall not know what hour I will come upon you." (Rev 3:1-3). Though this passage may cause a sense of fear and insecurity, we also need to consider, the converse that if we are prepared and alert, that if we are ready and vigilant, then the "coming of the Lord" becomes a joyful waiting and an expectant hope! Nothing fears the one who is prepared, to meet the Lord.

St Paul encourages us through these words: "But you brothers, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you as a thief!" (1 Thess 5: 2-4). When we are in the Light of Christ by a constant life of vigilant prayer, by a faithful life of sacraments, and by a committed life to the Church, No darkness can overpower us; No fear of thieves can cause panic.

As Christians, each one of us is entrusted with the duty of being faithful "employees" of the Kingdom of God. Are we going to "rest our feet on the desk" with a casual attitude and a laid-back and easy-going approach...? Or shall we be "armed and ever-ready to serve" with a sense of responsibility and commitment...?

The Son of Man comes to us in the course of our lives; his daily coming in the midst of life can also be unexpected. The Lord may call us to do something we had never thought about; he may take us down a path we might never have gone down if left to ourselves. The Lord can come to us through unexpected people, through people we would never think of as the Lord's messengers. The gospel reading suggests that when it comes to the Lord, we can expect the unexpected. As Isaiah says, his ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not our thoughts. He is always the God of surprises and that requires us to be alert and attentive to his many unexpected comings.

Be ready Our Boss – The Lord – may come anytime....!

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, grant that we may live in such a way that Your coming at the close of our earthly lives will not be something to be feared, but to be looked forward to with the most joyful anticipation. I pray for the grace to be aware of all our gifts, and of the responsibility they bring with them.

Jesus, We Trust In You