

NOVEMBER 8, 2020  
Sunday of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Week in OT  
Matthew 25: 1-13

“BE VIGILANT.”

“There is an old legend about a man who had a rather stupid servant. The master often got exasperated with his servant. One day in a fit of frustration he said to the servant, “You've got to be the stupidest man I've ever met. Look, I want you to take this staff and carry it with you. And if you ever meet a man stupider than you are, give him the staff.” So, the servant carried the staff. Often out in the marketplace he'd meet some pretty stupid people. But he was never sure they were worse off than he. Years passed with the servant carrying his staff. Then one day, he came back to the castle and was ushered into the bedroom of his master. His master was quite sick. In the course of their conversation, the master said, “I'm going on a long journey.” The servant said, “When do you plan to be back?” The master said, “This is a journey from which I'll not return.” The servant said, “Sir, have you made all the necessary preparations?” The master said, “No, I have not.” The servant said, “Could you have made preparations?” The master said, “Yes, I guess I've had my life to make them, but I've been busy about other things.” The servant said “Master, you're going on a journey from which you'll never return, you could've prepared for it, and you just didn't?” The master said, “Yes, I guess that's right.” The servant took the staff he'd carried so long and said, “Master take this with you. At last I've met a man more stupid than myself.”<sup>1</sup>

Be prepared – the theme of our gospel for today. Let us put into context the Parable of the Ten bridesmaids. “Wedding customs in ancient Palestine required extra vigilance and preparation for everyone involved. The bride and groom did not go away for their honeymoon but celebrated for a whole week with their family and friends. It

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<sup>1</sup> [www.stories4homilies.co](http://www.stories4homilies.co)

was the custom for the groom, in company with his friends, to come at his discretion and get his bride and bring her to their new home. They would take the longest route possible so that many villagers along the way could join in the wedding procession. Once they arrived and closed the doors, no one else could be admitted. If the groom decided to come and bring his bride at night, then lights were required by necessity to guide the travelers through the dark and narrow streets. No one was allowed on the village streets at night without a lamp!”<sup>2</sup>

Jesus Christ is warning us of the consequences for being ill-equipped and unprepared. During the first days of the opening of businesses and offices in this time of pandemic, we need to book online, and walk-in are discouraged. Most restaurants were for pick up only and not dine-in. Even in our parish, you need to go online, register and book to attend mass, a sign of foresight and preparedness. Also, we need to have travel arrangements to get into a special event that requires a prearranged permit or reservation. You just don't show up and enter without the proper pass. It is frustrating for a traveler when going overseas and they can't get into because they don't have the right visa or a valid passport. Everything must be prepared to avoid hassle, stress, delay, or discomfort. There are a lot of things that we cannot acquire, find, and get at the last moment.

My brothers and sisters, Jesus is reminding us that we should be wide-awake, ready, and prepared for His coming because we do not know the hour and the day. “The virgins stand for people who are waiting for the coming of the Lord. To be wise is to be ready and prepared for any eventuality, for what might happen. Those who were prepared were welcomed, while the unprepared were left out. Missing the feast meant losing the kingdom. The virgins typify mankind in search of purpose. Some lack

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<sup>2</sup> [www.dailyscripture.net](http://www.dailyscripture.net)

resolution, others are preoccupied with the distractions and trivialities while some stay focused on their ultimate purpose.”<sup>3</sup> My brothers and sisters, our Lord Jesus Christ invites us to the feast in His Kingdom, are we ready to come? Are we prepared or are we left out at the dark? Be ready, we do not know when the Lord will come.

Today we are also remembering our brave soldiers who sacrificed and died in military service for our country as celebrate Remembrance Day. Why we do this and why should we, as a nation and as Catholics, remember something so ... gloomy? This “is an opportunity, as a nation, to remember and appreciate those who have died so that we might live ... freely. As Catholics, we remember those who have gone before and pray for their souls. Most important of all, Remembrance Day can help inspire us to the greatest thing of which we are capable, by God’s grace: sacrificial love. Love that sacrifices for the beloved is divine and the only true love. In remembering what Our Lord did, what all His saints have done in memory of Him, and what others have done, we are reoriented to what life is really all about.”<sup>4</sup> Throughout history, who perfectly exemplified a sacrifice that could not have been more selfless or clearly intentional? The answer of course is Jesus Christ who saves us because He loves us unconditionally, and selfless. So, we pray for our fallen soldiers that God may reward them eternal life in heaven and we too may imitate them by our act of sacrifice for others daily little it may be.

Let this be our prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, help me to be vigilant and attentive to your call to follow you daily. Make me worthy of Your invitation to be with You and all the saints in the heavenly banquet. Amen.”

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<sup>3</sup> ibid

<sup>4</sup> [www.catholicsun.org](http://www.catholicsun.org)