

Wednesday of the Twenty-ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 12:39-48): Jesus said to his disciples: “Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.”

Then Peter said, “Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?” And the Lord replied, “Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed in coming,’ and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant’s master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish the servant severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful.

That servant who knew his master’s will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master’s will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more.”

“You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come”

Today, upon reading this fragment of the Gospel, we realize that each person is an administrator: when we are born, we all receive an inheritance of genes and capabilities to fulfill ourselves in our lives. We discover that these capabilities, and our very life, are just gifts from God, inasmuch we have not done anything to deserve them. They are the personal, unique and nontransferable gifts, which bestows our personality on us. They are the “talents” which the same Jesus speaks about (cf. Mt 25:15), and we should make them grow during our life span.

Jesus finally ends the first paragraph by saying: “For at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come” (Lk 12:40). It is our hope the Lord Jesus will come at the end of time; but, now and here, Jesus also appears in our lives, in the simplicity and in the complexity of every moment. It is now then, with the Lord's strength, we can live his Kingdom. St. Augustine reminds us in the words of the Psalm 33:12: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people chosen as his inheritance”, so that we can be fully aware of it while belonging to this kinship.

“You also must be prepared” (Lk 12:40), this exhortation implies a call to fidelity, never submitted to selfishness. It is our responsibility to know “how to react” to the goods we have received with our life. “Knowing his master's will” (cf. Lk 12:47), is what we identify as our “conscience”, and it is what makes us responsible for our actions. It is a matter of justice and love on our side, to generously respond to Mankind, and towards each one of its living beings.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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"I am a lowly creature but I am still his servant, and I hope that he will choose to wake me from slumber. I hope that he will set me on fire with the flame of his divine love, the flame that burns above the stars, so that I am filled with desire for his love and his fire burns always within me!"
(Saint Columbanus, abbot)

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"Across the centuries, it is the drowsiness of the disciples that opens up possibilities for the

power of the Evil One. Such drowsiness deadens the soul, so that it remains undisturbed by the power of the Evil One" (Benedict XVI)

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“In Jesus ‘the Kingdom of God is at hand’, He calls his hearers to conversion and faith, but also to watchfulness. In prayer the disciple keeps watch, attentive to Him Who Is and Him Who Comes (...). In communion with their Master, the disciples' prayer is a battle; only by keeping watch in prayer can one avoid falling into temptation.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, N° 2612)