Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 12:32-48): Jesus said to his disciples: “Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

“Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master’s return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. 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, the master will put the servant 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 ready, for the Son of Man will come at an hour you do not expect»

Fr. Melcior QUEROL i Solà
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Today, the Gospel reminds us and requires us to have an attitude of vigilance, "for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come" (Luke 12:40). We must always be vigilant, we must live in tension, "unsettled." We are pilgrims in a passing world; our true homeland is in heaven. Our life is headed there; whether we like it or not, our earthly existence is projected toward the definitive encounter with the Lord, and in this encounter, "Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more" (Luke 12:48). Is this not, perhaps, the culminating moment of our lives? Let us live life intelligently, let us realize what true treasure is! Let us not chase after the treasures of this world, as so many people do. Let us not have their mentality!

According to the world's mentality: Your worth is equal to what you have! People are valued for their money, for their social class and status, for their prestige, for their power. All of that, in the eyes of God, is worthless! Suppose that today you are diagnosed with an incurable illness, and you are given at most a month to live... what will you do with your money? What good will your power, your prestige, your social class do you? They will be of no use to you! Do you realize that everything the world values so much, in the moment of truth, is worthless? And then, you look back at your surroundings, and your values change completely: your relationships with the people around you, love, that look of peace and understanding, those become true values, authentic treasures that you—behind the gods of this world—had always despised.

Have the evangelical intelligence to discern what the true treasure is! May the riches of your heart not be the gods of this world, but love, true peace, wisdom, and all the gifts that God grants to his beloved children.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "Each one of us must prepare for the end: the last day will not bring any harm to anyone who lives each day as if it were the last: live in such a way that you can die peacefully, because he who dies each day does not die forever" (Saint Augustine)

- “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 at work in the world, and by all the injustice and suffering ravaging the earth” (Benedict XVI)

- “In positive terms, the battle against the possessive and dominating self requires vigilance, sobriety of heart. When Jesus insists on vigilance, he always relates it to himself, to his coming on the last day and every day: today." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2,730)