

Friday 21st in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 25,1-13): Jesus said to his disciples, «This story throws light on what will happen in the kingdom of heaven. Ten bridesmaids went out with their lamps to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were careless while the others were sensible. The careless bridesmaids took their lamps as they were and did not bring extra oil. But those who were sensible, brought with their lamps flasks of oil. As the bridegroom delayed, they all grew drowsy and fell asleep. But at midnight, a cry rang out: ‘The bridegroom is here, come out and meet him!’ All the maidens woke up at once and trimmed their lamps. Then the careless ones said to the sensible ones: ‘Give us some oil, for our lamps are going out’. The sensible ones answered: ‘There may not be enough for both you and us. You had better go to those who sell and buy for yourselves’. They were out buying oil when the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him to the wedding feast, and the doors were shut. Later the rest of the bridesmaids arrived and called out: ‘Lord, Lord, open to us’. But he answered: ‘Truly, I do not know you’. So, stay awake, for you do not know the day nor the hour».

«Truly, I do not know you»

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Today, Friday, 21st week in ordinary time, the Lord, in the Gospel, reminds us of the convenience of staying always awake and ready to meet him. Whether at midnight, or at any other moment, a cry can ring out at our door to invite us to come out and meet our Lord. Death never makes appointments. In fact, «you do not know the day nor the hour» (Mt 25:13).

To be on the alert does not mean to live with fear and anguish. It means to live our life as sons of God, our life of faith, hope and charity, in a responsible way. The Lord is continuously waiting for our response of faith and love, constant and patient, amid the chores and preoccupations that weave our life.

And this response can only be given by us; you and I. Nobody else can give it in our place. This is what it means the denial of the sensible maidens to the careless ones to share their oil for the lamps that were going out: «You had better go to those who sell and buy for yourselves» (Mt 25:9). Our response before God is, therefore, personal and not transferable.

Let us not wait for a “tomorrow” —that may never come— to trim up the lamp of our love for the Spouse. Carpe diem! We must live every second of our life with all the passion a Christian must feel for his Lord. It is a well-known saying but we might as well refresh our memory: «Live every day of your life as if it is your first, as if it is your only available day, as if it is your last day». A realistic call for a necessary and reasonable conversion that we have to carry out.

Let God give us the grace of his mercy that we may not have to hear in the supreme hour: «Truly, I do not know you» (Mt 25:12), that is, «you have had no relation whatsoever with me». Let us treat the Lord in this life in such a way we may become his acquaintances and friends in our time and in eternity.