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”

Fr. Josep Lluís SOCÍAS i Bruguera
(Badalona, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel reminds us that every person is a steward. From the moment we are born, each of us receives an inheritance—gifts written into our very being and capacities meant to be developed throughout life. We soon discover that these abilities—and life itself—are gifts from God, for we did nothing to earn them. They are personal, unique, and unrepeatable gifts; they make us who we are. These are the “talents” that Jesus speaks of (cf. Mt 25:15), the qualities we are called to cultivate and make

fruitful over the course of our lives.

Jesus ends the first part of today's passage with a solemn warning: "For at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come" (Lk 12:40). Our great hope lies in the coming of the Lord Jesus at the end of time. Yet even now—here and today—Christ is present in our lives, in both the simplicity and the complexity of each moment. It is now, with the Lord's strength, that we can already live in His Kingdom. St. Augustine reminds us of this with the words of Psalm 33:12, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord", so we can be fully aware of it while belonging to this nation.

"You also must be prepared" (Lk 12:40). This exhortation is a call to fidelity—a fidelity that can never be guided by selfishness. We have the responsibility to give a true response to the gifts we have received along with our life itself. "Knowing the will of the master" (Lk 12:47), is what we call conscience, and through which we become truly responsible for our actions. A generous response on our part—toward humanity, toward every living being—is both just and loving.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "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)

- "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)

- "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, Nº 2612)