

Sunday 32nd (A) in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 25,1-13): Jesus told this parable 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».

«The bridegroom is here, come out and meet him!»

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Today, we are invited to mull over the purpose of our existence; it is a word of caution from the Good God concerning our final destination; let us not, therefore,

play with our life. «The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom» (Mt 25:1). The eventual end of each person will be contingent on the path he picks out; death is a consequence of the life -sensible or imprudent- that we have carried on in this world. Foolish girls are those who having heard Jesus' message have not put it into practice. Sensible girls, instead, are those that have applied it to their lives and, therefore, are now able to be present at the wedding feast in the Kingdom.

The parable is a very serious forewarning. «Stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour» (Mt 25:13). Do not ever let the lamps of faith go out, for any moment could be your last. The Kingdom is already here. Kindle the lamps with the oil of faith, of fraternity and of mutual charity. Our hearts, full of light, will allow us to enjoy the true fulfillment here and now. Those who live around us every day will also be enlightened and will experience the delight of the company of the long-awaited Bridegroom. Jesus requests us to never be short of this oil in our lamps.

This is why, the Second Vatican Council, that selects from the Bible the images of the Church, brings up this comparison of the bridegroom and the bride, by proclaiming it with these words: «The Church is also described as the spotless spouse of the spotless Lamb, whom Christ "loved and for whom he delivered Himself up that He might sanctify her", whom He united to Himself by an unbreakable covenant, and whom He unceasingly "nourishes and cherishes" and whom, once purified, He willed to be cleansed and joined to Himself, subject to Him in love and fidelity».