

Wednesday of the Thirty-third Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk 19:11-28*): While people were listening to Jesus speak, he proceeded to tell a parable because he was near Jerusalem and they thought that the Kingdom of God would appear there immediately.

So he said, “A nobleman went off to a distant country to obtain the kingship for himself and then to return. He called ten of his servants and gave them ten gold coins and told them, ‘Engage in trade with these until I return.’ His fellow citizens, however, despised him and sent a delegation after him to announce, ‘We do not want this man to be our king.’ But when he returned after obtaining the kingship, he had the servants called, to whom he had given the money, to learn what they had gained by trading. The first came forward and said, ‘Sir, your gold coin has earned ten additional ones.’ He replied, ‘Well done, good servant! You have been faithful in this very small matter; take charge of ten cities.’ Then the second came and reported, ‘Your gold coin, sir, has earned five more.’ And to this servant too he said, ‘You, take charge of five cities.’ Then the other servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your gold coin; I kept it stored away in a handkerchief, for I was afraid of you, because you are a demanding man; you take up what you did not lay down and you harvest what you did not plant.’ He said to him, ‘With your own words I shall condemn you, you wicked servant. You knew I was a demanding man, taking up what I did not lay down and harvesting what I did not plant; why did you not put my money in a bank? Then on my return I would have collected it with interest.’ And to those standing by he said, ‘Take the gold coin from him and give it to the servant who has ten.’ But they said to him, ‘Sir, he has ten gold coins.’ He replied, ‘I tell you, to

everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. Now as for those enemies of mine who did not want me as their king, bring them here and slay them before me.’”

After he had said this, he proceeded on his journey up to Jerusalem.

“Engage in trade with these until I return”

Fr. Pere SUÑER i Puig SJ
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Today, the Gospel proposes to us the parable of the pounds: an amount of money that a noble man gives out to his servants, before leaving for a far country. First, let us pay attention to the occasion provoking Jesus' parable. He was “getting near” Jerusalem, where He was to face his Passion and his subsequent resurrection. The disciples “thought that the Kingdom of God would appear there immediately” (Lk 19:11). Under these circumstances Jesus proposes this parable. With it, Jesus teaches us that we have to put the gifts and qualities He has given each one of us, to work. They are not “ours” for us to do whatever we want with them. He has given them to us in trust so that we can yield a return. Those who had yielded a profit from the pounds were —more or less— praised and rewarded by their Lord. It was for the loafer servant, who kept the moneys in safekeeping without getting any pay-off, to get the blame and be punished.

We, Christians, must —naturally!— wait for our Lord Jesus' return. But, if we want the meeting to be friendly, we must meet both of the following two conditions. The first one is for us to avoid any unhealthy curiosity to know the timing of the Lord's solemn and victorious return. He will come, He says somewhere else, when we least expect it. So, quit worrying over that. Let us wait with hope, but with a hope without any unhealthy curiousness. The second condition is that we waste no time. Waiting for this meeting and joyous finale cannot be taken as a reason for not seriously looking at the present moment. Because the joy and enjoyment of the final gathering will precisely be the better depending upon each one's contribution, in our present life, to the cause of the Kingdom of God.

And we shall not miss here either Jesus' grave warning to those rebelling against

Him: “Now as for those enemies of mine who did not want me as their king, bring them here and slay them before me” (Lk 19:27).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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“When a Christian kills time on this earth, he is putting himself in danger of 'killing Heaven' for himself” (Saint Josemaria)

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“Any environment, even the furthest and most impractical, can become a place where our talents can bear fruit. There are no situations or places precluded from the Christian presence and witness.” (Francis)

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“... Each man is established as an "heir" and receives certain "talents" that enrich his identity and whose fruits he must develop. He rightly owes loyalty to the communities of which he is part...” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n 1880)