

Wednesday 33rd in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 19,11-28): Jesus was now near Jerusalem and the people with him thought that God's reign was about to appear. So as they were listening to him, Jesus went on to tell them a parable. He said, «A man of noble birth went to a distant place to have himself appointed king of his own people, after which he would return. Before he left, he summoned ten of his servants and gave them ten pounds. He said: 'Put this money to work until I get back'. But his compatriots who disliked him sent a delegation after him with this message: 'We do not want this man to be our king'.

»He returned, however, appointed as king. At once he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, to find out what profit each had made. The first came in and reported: 'Sir, your pound has earned ten more'. The master replied: 'Well done, my good servant. Since you have proved yourself capable in a small matter, I can trust you to take charge of ten cities'. The second reported: 'Sir, your pound earned five more pounds'. The master replied: 'Right, take charge of five cities'. The third came in and said: 'Sir, here is your money which I hid for safekeeping. I was afraid of you for you are an exacting person; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow'. The master replied: 'You worthless servant, I will judge you by your own words. So you knew I was an exacting person, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow! Why, then, did you not put my money on loan so that when I got back I could have collected it with interest?'.

»Then the master said to those standing by: 'Take from him that pound, and give it to the one with ten pounds'. They objected: 'But,

sir, he already has ten!'. 'I tell you: everyone who has will be given more; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for my enemies who did not want me to be king, bring them in and execute them right here in my presence'».

So Jesus spoke, and he went on ahead of them, on his way to Jerusalem.

«Put this money to work until I get back»

Fr. Pere SUÑER i Puig SJ
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel proposes 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 «with him thought that God's reign was about to appear» (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 final cannot be taken as a reason not to seriously look 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: «As for my enemies who did not want me to be king, bring them in and execute them right here in my presence» (Lk 19:27).