

***Luke 12:32-40***

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

“Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.”

“But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

***The Gospel of the Lord***

**Reflection Questions**  
**Luke 12:32-40 – 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday OT (c)**

- 1) **The Context:** This passage is just one part of a larger section on Jesus' warnings and exhortations (Luke 12:1-13:9) The Gospel from last week warned against storing up treasure for oneself and neglecting to be rich towards God. In this section, Luke is trying to offer hope and encouragement to those early Christians suffering persecution as Luke reassures his readers that there is in fact a day of reckoning for their persecutors and relief for themselves if they remain faithful to God during persecution. This section is made up of 3 parables: 1) the wedding banquet; promising blessings to those who keep watch 2) The coming of the thief (vv. 39-40), warns of the coming judgment for those who are not ready. 3) the faithful and unfaithful slave (vv. 41-48 not part of this Sunday's gospel).
- 2) "Do not be afraid little flock, for it is your Father's great pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke is trying to reassure those who are living in fear (experiencing daily persecution and loss) that their Father in heaven is watching out for their every need. The term "little flock" is referring to the disciples and by extension all the followers of Christ in the early Church (a little 'flock' within the larger flock of Israel). Just as Jesus does not want them to worry about their daily bread, neither does He want them to question God's eternal goodness towards them. How do we experience God this way? (the one who encourages us not to worry about daily provision or eternal provision)? Do we believe that it is truly "Our Father in Heaven's good pleasure" to offer us the kingdom?
- 3) "Sell your possessions, give alms" (vs. 33) is a reference to the early Church activities noted in Luke and Acts (Lk. 3:10-11, 6:38, Acts 6:1-4); when people pooled their possessions there was plenty to redistribute to those who were most in need. How does this work in our Catholic Christian communities today? How is our awareness of and spirituality of stewardship like these early Church acts of charity?
- 4) Jesus promises that those who do these things will create an 'unfailing treasure in heaven'; reminding us of John chp. 14:2-3 where Jesus

says “I go ahead of you to prepare a place for you, in My Father’s House there are many mansions.” What does our ‘unfailing treasure in heaven’ look like? What kinds of loving actions is God calling us to participate in which will have potential eternal consequences? How do those actions done with and for God’s love create a win- win situation for everyone involved and naturally glorify God?

- 5) “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (vs. 34). We all know what it feels like to get something new (a car, a bike, a house). We also know how ‘painful’ it is to see that car, bike, house ‘suffer’ its first depreciating bit of damage. When have you discovered how much you ‘love’ an inanimate object once you saw it get damaged? Have you ever suffered a severed relationship with a person because of an inanimate object? How do we see this dynamic often played out in our materialistic culture? The dynamic may be subtle and gradual but suddenly at times we discover that our hearts are sometimes more attached to things (e.g. 401K, house, car, motorcycle) than to people. How is this true in our own lives?
- 6) “Be dressed for action, have your lamps lit,” (35a) recalls the instructions for the original Passover meal. Oil lamps are the kind of lamp that require constant attention, the wick must be trimmed and the oil must be replenished. The poorly maintained lamp will not be easily lit. How are our lives like this? What (whom) do we hold vigil for? Our crisis workers (firefighters, EMTs, soldiers and physicians always need to be prepared for what they will be called to do. They know their trade and what is required of them to be prepared to respond to the crisis they are called to alleviate. What is the preparation of a disciple of Christ? How is Jesus helping us to be prepared for the inevitable crisis? (life/death/sickness/disaster/meeting a person who desperately needs to know the love of Christ)?
- 7) “Blessed are those slaves (douloi) whom the Master (Kurios- Lord) finds alert when He comes; truly, I tell you, He will come and have them sit down and eat, and He will serve them.” To be a ‘doulos’ is to be someone who is willing to do the will of the master whenever asked. In this situation the douloi (slaves) are the disciples (servants of the servants). Jesus serves those who have served the least of these.

Jesus in the Second Coming will flip every form of ‘social status’ on its head. How is this refreshing? In what ways might it be scary (and for whom)?

- 8) What kind of thief would call ahead to let the owner of the house know that he was coming? Likewise, God does let us know the exact time of the second coming; because the necessary preparation to receive Christ at the end of time is the same preparation that is needed to receive Him as He comes to us daily and as He meets us at the end of our lives. This kind of preparation is in many ways its own reward because it is a core daily discipline for any disciple of Christ who desires grow in Christ. In what ways are we like people keeping vigil waiting for the ways that He chooses to come to us? In what ways are we called to help others maintain vigil? The Sanctus lamp in our sanctuaries holds ‘vigil’ with the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, reminding us that He is truly present in that place. How are we called to be the “Sanctus Lamp” for others (pointing to the real presence of Christ within us and around us) in the world who do not yet know Christ?