

Thirty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time - A - 2020
Wisdom 6.12-16///1Thess.4.13-18///Matt. 25. 1-13

→it seems as if one day, Fr. Murphy paid a visit to one of his elderly parishioners whom he hadn't seen at church for a few months...

→during the visit...in a nice way...he tried to tell her that she should really try to come to church more often...he said... "you know...you aren't getting any younger and you should really start thinking more of the hereafter."

→ "well Father Murphy" she replied looking quite surprised [she said]... "I do think of the hereafter...in fact I think of the hereafter almost every day."

"I go into the kitchen and say to myself... what am I here after

I go into the bedroom and ask... what am I here after....

→I am sure many of you can relate to this...I know as I get older I find this happening to me more and more.... "what am I here after...."

→well in a strange sort of way....our lives as Christians can be described in a similar way.

→while on this earth... "what are we here after"

PAUSE

→today we begin the familiar theme of the end times and our waiting for the Lord to return at the end of time

→our readings today--- as they always do at this time of year ---...focus on this theme as we anticipate a new Church year, another holiday season---and the coming of Christ his glory.....in a word.....the end times and coming of the Kingdom

→and as we wait for Christ's return, we are reminded once again that our waiting should not be in a passive, lifeless, or unresponsive fashion...but more so our waiting for Christ should find us actively and anxiously anticipating his return in all his glory

→i.o.w. ----we should not be about an empty waiting as though nothing is happening or going on

----but rather as we go about our lives, going to school, raking leaves, changing diapers, working at our jobs....keeping busy...we are waiting for the moment....announcing the return of Christ.

→every moment of our existence....all of our activities and the events of our lives should point us towards and open up for us...our hope of eternity with Christ

→and our waiting here and **now in this life**....is our way of constantly preparing for the coming of Christ

PAUSE

→that is why we hear today in our gospel **this** story that the reign of God can be likened to 10 bridesmaids waiting for the groom.

→as we heard....some (the five foolish ones) waited as if there was nothing for them to do...they brought no oil...and they fell asleep

→while the others (the five wise ones) realizing that the groom could come at any time...prepare themselves...bringing with them enough oil...trimming their lamps...and making themselves ready

→anticipating that the bridegroom might come in 90 seconds, or 90 minutes, or maybe in 90 hours.

PAUSE

→[you see] back then weddings were considered big events of anticipation and excitement... like standing on our tip toes...we usually do so in anticipation of some big event that is about to happen....

→that is why this parable and the image that Jesus uses of bridesmaids and the coming of the groom is so meaningful

→back then people celebrated weddings in an expectant manner...very similar to way we celebrate them today....spending weeks, and months, and sometimes even years waiting and expecting a wedding celebration

→however...in ancient times, when a wedding was about to happen.....the groom would spend a period of time negotiating with the bride's father...the dowry, the money or property that the bride was bringing to the marriage with her...all the while...the guests for the wedding would be waiting in anticipation of the celebration

→and...if the negotiations took a long time...then the wedding procession and all the guests would be put on hold

→waiting... until all was settled and the negotiations were complete.

→ →can you imagine that happening today....going to a wedding reception and being told that you had to wait until every matter between the couple was first settled...
[in some instances we might never even get to the food...let alone the cookies!]

→and so.... as a result..... the whole wedding party, bridesmaids and guests had to be alert because they would never know when the negotiations would be complete and the wedding would start

→and so....the guests would wait with lighted lamps in anticipation for the couple to be united...

→well that is what happens today....10 bridesmaids are selected to form a welcoming party for the groom...set at night...the bridesmaids were to light a path for the groom using oil lamps...

→as it happens the groom is delayed in coming to the wedding...5 bridesmaids have oil while the other 5 do not...so those five go off to their version of Wal-Mart to buy oil and while doing so...the doors to the wedding feast close...and the five foolish bridesmaids are left with nothing but old lamps and regrets....

PAUSE

→that is why Jesus parallels this image to the coming of the kingdom of God

→because just as Jesus is urging his listeners to be ready...with lamps full of oil for the spirit of God...this very same message is being given to you and me today as well...some 2000 years later

→we need to be ready...actively waiting and enthusiastically preparing....with our lamps ready, burning brightly.....for the coming of the Lord

→by truly living the Gospel message...here and now...in everyday of our lives

PAUSE

→our readiness is important...

→our readiness to receive Christ

→to have Christ come into our world, into our lives, and into our hearts.

→...our readiness....our hope for the coming of Christ...in all his glory....should fill every moment...every word...every action of our lives

→so that we don't find ourselves going from room to room wondering "what am I here after"

→...but rather we find our lamps ready and full when Jesus Christ comes calling...whether that happens to be in the next 90 seconds, in next 90 minutes or in the next 90 years.