

Nineteen Sunday Ordinary Time C 2019
Wis. 18.6-9///Heb. 11.1-2,8-19///Luke 12.32-48

→this past week I came across an article in the newspaper entitled, “*How Long Things Last*” ...it was an interesting article pointing out some facts about how long certain items in life last.

→for example, the average life of the shoes worn by major league baseball players is only two months

→the average life of a stick used by a hockey player is only two games

→and the average life of a soldier’s boots worn in a time of peace is fifteen months, while in a time of war it drops to only three months.

→and while the lifespan of certain things are shorter than we might think...the lifespans of other things are quite long

→for example a can of beer can remain in tack for about 80 years...a leather shoe can last around 50 years and the average rock protruding from the ground can last thousands years

→but whatever it might be...a hockey stick, a beer can or a rock, the articles ended with the well-known conclusion that eventually everything *will disappear...for nothing lasts forever.*

→and what is true of hockey sticks, beer cans and rocks is also true of human beings

→we too will eventually disappear...because none of us will last forever

→and that is precisely the point that Jesus is making in today's gospel and why he warns that we must "light our lamps...and be prepared for at an hour you do not expect the Son of Man will come."

→[now] in one sense...

...the scripture readings today are about letting go of that which we possess in order to attain a greater good

→---and letting go of something we cherish....often takes a great amount of courage and faith especially when being asked to believe.....what is yet to come will exceed what we already have

---i.o.w....it is always a great risk...or it takes a great "leap of faith" to give away what we have --- with the hope of getting something much greater in return...yet isn't that what life is often all about?

→in the 1st reading, recall that God's chosen peoplewhile rejoicing in their exodus from Egypt...also took a great leap of faith and trust....leaving behind what was comfortableto move towards the promised land...

→and.....in the 2nd reading, Paul makes reference to faith as being "the realization of things we hope for"

→he speaks about Abraham who took a leap of faith and set out "not knowing where he was going" in search of the "city designed and built by God"

---because there "he was to receive an inheritance

---and furthermore, it was his wife --- SARAH ---and...her faith in God that enabled her to have a child

---and finally, in the gospel reading today, Jesus promises the kingdom to those who freely let go of their attachment to earthly possessions and prepare themselves for the treasure of heaven

---recall the very powerful words of Jesus..... *“for where your treasure is...there also will your heart be”*

→undoubtedly for Abraham...his only son ISAAC was his treasure...but ultimately Abraham’s heart was with God and when God demanded the sacrifice of Isaac...Abraham took a leap of faith and was ready to sacrifice his treasure

→all of us, in some way, have an Isaac in our lives...a treasure that promises us our heart’s desire...yet I believe the lesson of this reading for us today...is that it is important that we recognize what we truly treasure most in life...and prepare ourselves for it

PAUSE

→there is a story told about a sailor who was shipwrecked and washed ashore on a South Pacific island.

→well....he was greeted enthusiastically by natives who hoisted him on their shoulders, carried him to their village and sat him on a golden throne

→little by little, the sailor learned what was going on....

→the islanders, you see, had a custom of making a person king for a year...and during his reign he could order his subject to do anything within reason and they would obey without question.

→well the sailor was delighted that he had been chosen king...he couldn't believe his good fortune...however one day he began to wonder what happened to the king when his year of reign was up...

→and that is when his excitement and enthusiasm came to an abrupt end...because he discovered that at the end of his year he would be banished to a barren island...to be left to starve to death as a sacrifice to the gods.

→[well] after realizing all this the sailor slowly began to put together a plan

→as king...he ordered the carpenters of the island to build a small fleet of boats...and when they were ready he ordered the farmers of the island to dig up fruit trees and plants and put them on the boats....

--he then set sail for the deserted island that would eventually become his home and had them plant the trees and fruits...and soon after he ordered the stone masons to the island to build himself a home

--in the end..... the sailor prepared carefully for the day when his kingship would end and he would be banished for the rest of his life.

→that story is a good illustration of what Jesus is telling us in today's gospel [as well]

→Because today we are being invited to ask ourselves how well are we preparing ourselves for that day, when like the sailor in the story, our life on this planet will come to an end.

→how ready will we be to face God when our time on this island is over...

→and if our answer to that question leaves something to be desired...then we can be sure that Jesus is speaking to us in today's gospel by reminding us that

...that true joy, true happiness in this life comes about not by acquiring everything and anything but more so true happiness comes through the sharing of our treasures...the treasures of wealth, of time, of talents, of skills, of knowledge and of compassion towards and with others

→we hear at the end of today's gospel... "much will be required of the person entrusted with much...and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more!"

PAUSE

→I am sure that there will be plenty of opportunities for all of us in the coming week for us to open our hearts and to share our treasures

→and perhaps we it would behoove us to do just that and take advantage of the many opportunities we have to share our treasures to those in need...so that we too might be ready when the Lord comes at an unexpected hour!