

Rectoría San Juan de Dios
XXXII Sunday of Ordinary Time-Cycle A
Wis 6, 12-16; Ps 63; 1 Thes 4, 13-18; Mt 25, 1-13
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Balm for the Meeting

Toward the end of our liturgical year, this tone of the end of history and of our history emerges. The image of the ten virgins shows how the second coming of Christ could be; He is the bridegroom for whom the community of believers (the virgins) waits, and He permits entrance to the wedding banquet to those among them who have responded by preparing themselves for the final day.

At the general level, in this parable we encounter a clear mandate: to prepare for our final meeting with God, a meeting in which our daily actions count. These actions make up the balm or oil of meeting that makes my spiritual profile shine; it is an oil prepared with my own being. The supply of oil that distinguishes me for eternity is the sum of my actions of love; it is the end result in a series of personal choices that impregnate the oil of my baptismal anointing with my own aroma, an oil that reveals the quality of the love in my relationship with God and with my brothers.

In the midst of a world that thinks very little about eternal realities, how important it is to pause awhile to reestablish the sense of belief and hope in our daily actions, and how prudent it is to begin to prepare our oil for the meeting!

Let us take this small road of our three ideas, recreating our personal and communal history:

1-Let us allow Wisdom to reach us.

Although the Wisdom of God is there to be found, the encounter is presented as a romantic courtship; only he who truly loves God's supervision of his life succeeds in consummating his prudence.

To awaken early for her and to keep awake for her implies a life sensitive to the intervention of God in our lives; the fruits are great, giving us the joy and rest of a more ordered and full life.

It is not simple to discover the Wisdom of God in our lives, but each of us can confirm that in certain moments of our lives, we have been reached by Wisdom. For example, when a mother holds her dying child and has to make difficult decisions that clearly reflect the Grace of God, she is aided by the Wisdom of God.

The proposal in this first idea is for us to accustom ourselves to allowing the Wisdom of God to reach us at every turn.

2- Let us console each other.

The sense of waiting for the meeting with God is complete when we share the same hope in community, when we realize that, while we await the final day, it is necessary to work intensely, without lowering our guard, helping each other in the attentive gentleness of joy and prayer.

It is very probable that Paul has encountered a community of placid people, whose members were idle while awaiting the imminent return of the Lord. For that reason, Paul insists on the necessity of mutual consolation, of finding meaning in the labor of waiting, of preparation for the final moment.

3-Let us allow ourselves to be known by God.

The history of salvation starts here, from God's desire to enter into an intimate relationship with us. To know in the Biblical sense can be understood best from love, not so much from intellectual or rational knowledge. When we read in the Old Testament that two persons knew each other, we interpret that they occupied the same bed, that they knew each other intimately; they knew, in the closeness of the other person, the rhythm of their hearts, their humor, their interior brokenness from fears and their joys, and the fullness of the communication of love.

To allow ourselves to be known by God, to know God in the dynamic of deep love, is what ends up making a supply of pleasing and illuminating oil for the final moment.

In order to better comprehend the urgency of being known by God, let us look at the last verse of this Gospel. Why did the bridegroom not open the door to the careless virgins? The Word says: *"I am sure that I do not know you."* If each of us does not make a great effort toward a loving and deep knowledge of God, the same will happen to us.

Now we think: "Why did the wise virgins not share their oil with those who had none? Isn't that a self-centered act? The answer is not the most ready one—because there was not enough for everyone; it is because the oil that we present at the end of our lives is not transferrable. It has our own seal, the code of our loving relationship with God throughout our entire life. No one can present himself before God with what is mine, my personal story of acts of love; it is precisely this that makes me shine before God. What illumines me contains the echo of a whole lifetime of encounters with God by way of His Wisdom and by good works. It is what makes us more like Jesus.