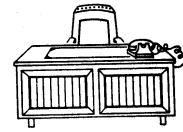


32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 8, 2020



From the Desk of
Fr. Romanus

Dear Parishioners,

Sunday Reflection:

The parable of the ten virgins in this Sunday's gospel is one of the most enigmatic and intriguing in the scripture and is only found in Matthew's gospel. The five virgins who were prepared were rewarded, while the five unprepared virgins were locked out of the wedding banquet. It is an eschatological parable because it deals with the end of time.

It is important to note that all ten virgins were running low on oil and their lamps were sputtering and burning out. The big difference between the wise virgins and the foolish ones was that the wise ones brought along extra oil, while the foolish did not. It is no wonder that the first reading personifies wisdom. Wisdom is inevitable in making good judgment in life, especially about our final destiny.

The refusal of the wise virgins to share their remaining oil tends to go against Christian charity, but they did not want to run the risk of being locked out. The extra oil each brought along would be enough for one person. Their failure to share was not intended to be selfish or uncharitable because the kind of oil needed for the light of salvation is not exchangeable. We have a lifetime to procure enough oil to last. Unfortunately, some people are too busy to care.

Have you ever run out of gas on the freeway? Besides dead batteries, flat tires, and misplaced keys, running out of gas ranks high on the reason most people call for roadside assistance. This is the case despite gas meters on vehicles, low gas warning lights, signs and messages on the dashboard of most modern vehicles. Reasons for running out of gas include: malfunctioning gas meters or electronics, procrastination, miscalculation, distraction and inattentiveness. Many people have gas cans in their trunk just in case they run out of gas. When people run out of gas, we rarely find other drivers sharing their gas. Those wishing to help might offer a ride to a gas station or lend a gas can. Such charity to the unwise may not apply at the end of time.

Those who have rejected the faith and turned their back on God and the Church should not be expected to enter heaven based on the right choices that others made. Now is the time to make the right choices and preparations for life with God while there is still time. When it is all said and done, each person would be accountable for his/her own choices.

In this parable of the ten virgins, the darkness outside depicts the world as unsafe and treacherous. To survive, one needs the light of the Holy Spirit. The Church is where one procures the oil/gas that keeps the light of the Holy Spirit burning. Some Catholics do not bother going to Church or living their faith. Sooner or later, their oil/gas would run out, and it might be too late to get a refill. By the same token, being physically present in Church will not be enough if one does not fill up at the gas stations on the journey of life. Apart from physical presence, one also needs to be spiritually present and actively participating. One also needs to live in accordance with the Christian faith. It would be foolish to be low on gas, pull into a gas station, and then drive off without filling up.

We ought to be always prepared because we do not know when the Son of Man will come. At some time in the future, we would hear the midnight call that the bridegroom has arrived. Those prepared would trim their lamps and enter the banquet, and the unprepared would be locked out. It is important to note that the ten virgins were not criticized for slumbering, since they all feel asleep. The main difference is that the foolish ones paid a big price for their lack of wisdom. In the journey of life, we may find ourselves dosing off now and then. However, we should exercise wisdom by ensuring that we are prepared for that last breath.

Have a great week!

Fr. Romanus