



Friday 27th August 2021

Twenty-first week in Ordinary Time Year 1

## Gospel

Mt 25:1-13

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*The bridegroom is here, go out and meet him.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven will be like this: Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were sensible: the foolish ones did take their lamps, but they brought no oil, whereas the sensible ones took flasks of oil as well as their lamps. The bridegroom was late, and they all grew drowsy and fell asleep. But at midnight there was a cry, "The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him." At this, all those bridesmaids woke up and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish ones said to the sensible ones, "Give us some of your oil: our lamps are going out." But they replied, "There may not be enough for us and for you; you had better go to those who sell it and buy some for yourselves." They had gone off to buy it when the bridegroom arrived. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding hall and the door was closed. The other bridesmaids arrived later. "Lord, Lord," they said, "open the door for us." But he replied, "I tell you solemnly, I do not know you." So stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour.'

### Reflection By Fr Graham Fullick

OK Lord, you are saying we have to be ready, but how do we have to be ready?

1. We have been witnesses to the Resurrection and the descent of the Holy Spirit, our helper in sanctification and holiness. We know that the Parousia, the final coming of Christ is promised in both his blood and heavenly glory, but is not here yet. We have received all the revelation that will be given to us. But we still have always to continue to work out its meaning and live as Christians in these end times, the last days. The bride groom is here, but not yet.
2. Look at the contrasting 2 sets of 5 bridesmaids, all virgins. The wise ones are disciples. They listened for the Lord's call. When the Lord calls, they are ready. They have their lamps, they are filled and are trimmed. The foolish bridesmaids are disciples too. They know they will hear the call, but they have done nothing. "The plaintive cry of the five foolish bridesmaids (Lord Lord open to us) represents the kind of believer who cries out "Lord, Lord", but has no **good works** to accompany this confession of faith (cf 7:21-27)." We cannot be like the scribes and Pharisees and be hypocrites. We cannot receive the Word of God, Christ himself and not do what the Divine Word tells us to do. To be Christian is to change often and be attentive to the Master's call and work like the bridesmaids.
3. The wise have the oil of good works, the good oil. Their torches have been primed by living the virtues and glorifying the Lord by their lives of worship, work and service of their Bridegroom. They do not sleep in life or even death with anxiety, but can wait in joyful hope for the final coming of their Saviour.
4. We cannot deceive ourselves. We must say to ourselves in our consciences "come, there is much work to do". We must respond to the Lord as Christians and turn 180 degrees from selfishness or more properly the self-deception of the false light of the devil. "Not everyone who says to Jesus 'Lord Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the Will of His Father in heaven" (cf Mt 7:21-27). That must be our will and testament at the end of our lives—and just as necessary, the prayerful intercession of those sinners and saints who pray for extra merit for us that we may be found ready and worthy when the Master knocks at any unlikely hour.
5. When the Bridegroom comes will he stand with his face ashen and say "what have you been doing? Standing idle in my marketplace, the world?" "Why haven't you made my kingdom come?" "Why can't people see your works ready for my marriage banquet in heaven?" Then the virtuous bridesmaids will enter. Have you prayed your morning offering today? Good. Now go and make your offering and do what the Bridegroom asks of you, to be ready for the Last call.