



## 32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)



Matthew 25: 1 – 13

Jesus spoke this parable to the 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 wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept.

“But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But they replied, ‘No! There will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut.

“Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us.’ But he replied, ‘Truly, I tell you, I do not know you.’ Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

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Reflection:

Our parents warn us because they love us. In their care and concern for us, they want to protect us from all harm. When Jesus warns us in today’s Gospel, he shows he loves us. In his care and concern for us, he wants to make sure we are ready for his coming. In the end, it’s up to us. Will we prepare ourselves as best we can or will we wait until it is too late?



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

Jesus often compares the kingdom of heaven to a wedding (or a banquet) and speaks of himself as the bridegroom. What do you think he is trying to tell us about heaven?



### **Parenting Corner:**

Heaven is often portrayed, in modern culture, as some five-star resort, where everyone finally gets to do what they always wanted to do. It is a place of excess and of unrestricted pleasure that satisfies the material pursuits of our heart (i.e. more of the things we like, none of the things we don't like). God, as the "Proprietor", is only mentioned in passing.

Jesus speaks to us of the underlying (spiritual) qualities of heaven (i.e. love, mercy, forgiveness, generosity, peace, purity, equality, community, etc.), those things that are the first to suffer in our pursuit for that which doesn't last.

Depending on one's pursuit, being in the presence of God may have different implications. Some may see it as eternal bliss, others may see it more as something to endure (a sidebar, even distraction, to their fulfillment).

It is interesting to note that our idea of God and heaven has a direct impact on how we view the "things of God" in this life.

### **Family Activity:**

Challenge everyone in your family (including extended family and other families you know) to a drawing contest. The Theme: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like..."

Take a moment to reflect on the positive elements you see in each picture...

### **Angel of God Prayer (adapted):**

Angel of God, my light and my guide,  
be always with me at my side,  
keep me from evil and protect me from harm,  
lead me to heaven, arm in arm.



## **All Souls Family Prayer Service:**

### Sign of the Cross.

Prayer: Lord God, Father of us all, who sent your Son into the world as the sign of your love, hear our prayers on behalf of those who have died (especially... (names of people you know)) and lead us always to your kingdom; we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Read Matthew 25: 1 – 13 (This Sunday's Gospel).

### Prayers of the Faithful

We pray for the Church around the world, that it may continue to proclaim the great message of hope to the world, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died of hunger, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died alone, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died of illness, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died in the prime of youth, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died of old age, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died in war, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died in accidents, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died from our family and friends (take a moment to mention each of them by name), we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have died without hearing the message of God's love, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who have lost someone they loved, that they may be consoled by the gift of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the Church around the world, that it may continue to proclaim the great message of hope to the world, we pray to the Lord: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

### "Our Father..."

Prayer: Lord God, Creator of all that is good, we offer you our prayers on behalf of all those who have died, welcome them into your kingdom and show them the love that they need, we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



### **The Death of St. Bede:**

The news had spread through the house like wildfire. Bede, the most respected member of their community was dying, and he only had a few more days to live.

It all started with the swelling of his ankles and difficulty in catching his next breath. For two weeks he had been confined to his bed. And he no longer joined the community for their daily hours of prayer.

They had hoped that it was a seasonal thing, a lung infection that would soon clear. But Bede's health grew worse, not better, as he gathered his friends by his side.

Bede was known as a wise old owl, there was no one as wise as he. In the finest Latin he wrote. People had come to him from far and wide to seek his advice, to hear him speak of God. Bede had always been generous with his time, but most of it was spent in study and prayer.

While he was well, he had written forty books on topics as diverse as Science, History and Religion. He wrote each book in the finest of Latin; there was no greater Latin scholar than Bede.

"I am dying," he told his friends, one day. "It's getting harder and harder to breathe. But please don't be sad, call all my friends and spend this time with me."

His friends came to him one by one, each received some words of advice. To one Bede spoke of the importance of prayer, to another the beauty of Mass, to others he spoke of good study habits, while others were given advice on how best to listen on what God might call them to do.

When Bede had finished sharing his advice, he wanted to share the little he had. "God has been good to me," he said. "And I have never been in need. I want to share the few things I have: the things God has given to me." And from a small box, no bigger than a loaf of bread, he removed a small amount of pepper, some napkins and a few grains of incense."

"Take and enjoy," Bede said, as he distributed the gifts to his friends. "It isn't much, but it is all that I have. I give it all to you."

Then he spoke of God's greatest gift, Jesus Christ, God's only Son. "Of all the things I was given, there was no greater gift than he."

"Pray for me," he asked his friends when the bell for Evening Prayer tolled. "Pray for me, and don't forget. Remember me when you are at Mass."

Of all his friends, only Wilbert remained, ready to write his last words. "Write it down, write it down," Bede continued to say, until he had spoken his final word. "It's enough, it's enough, there is nothing left. Please stay with me a little while."

Very few of his friends rested that night and many returned to his side. "All is well, all is well," Bede would sometimes say, "with joy I wait to meet my Lord."

Then, as if seeing Christ, Bede's face lit up with the greatest joy. "My Lord, my Lord," he whispered and then with a sigh of relief. "Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." And with that he breathed his last.

"To us, who were left," writes Cuthbert, his friend, "Bede's death was quite a shock. A great man was he, not in power or gold, but in love of God and neighbour, too."