

Reading 1: Wisdom 18:6-9  
 Reading 2: Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19

Responsorial Psalm : Psalm 32  
 Gospel : Luke 12:32-48

### Gospel Reading: *Luke 12:32-48*

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. "Gird your loins and light your lamps and be like servants who await their master's return from a wedding, ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival. Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself, have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them. And should he come in the second or third watch and find them prepared in this way, blessed are those servants. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come."

Then Peter said, "Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?" And the Lord replied, "Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, the master will put the servant in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish the servant severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful. That servant who knew his master's will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more."

### Meditation:

This teaching of our Lord should make us all sit up and take serious notice this morning. He has taken us into his household. He has made us his "little flock." We are invited guests in his home, his Church, rather than mere servants. He warns us today that we must always be busy about our vocation, about the reason why he invited us into his home. If we grasped clearly what that call of Christ means, what our Christian vocation is, we would hardly need today's warning. We are Christians, we are members of his Church, for our own eternal good. God, through Christ's Incarnation, has put us on the road to heaven. He is ever helping us on the way. Could we be so blind to our own welfare that we would risk losing the eternal life that God has in store for us, and for which he went to the extreme lengths of love? In our saner moments we would give an emphatic no to this question. Yet, we must look the real facts of life in the face. There are many Christians who are destined for heaven but who, in their folly, have left the only road which leads there, and are now travelling in the opposite direction.

We may have let this world get such a grip on us that we have no time or thought for the world that is to come. For such foolish people, and indeed for all of us, today's warning is that our call to judgement will come on each one of us like a thief in the night, at a moment when we least expect it. This need not be a sudden death. Of every thousand who die after long illnesses in our hospitals, there rarely is one who knows and admits he is about to die, so actually all deaths are sudden, that is, unexpected.

However the unexpected death, which we are sure to get, need not worry the ordinary good Christian. It is the unprepared, the unprovided-for, death which must cause us anxiety. It need not, if, when it comes, it finds us living in God's grace, living the ordinary Christian life, doing our daily tasks but doing them as part of our duty to God. We have to take an interest in the affairs of this world, but the interest must never exclude our eternal interest. Instead it can and must help us toward the one real interest that man has in this life, that is, to earn his eternal life.

Take a serious look at your way of living, today. Is your behavior in the home, in your place of work, in your recreation, in your relations with God---prayers and church attendance---and with your neighbor, it is such that you would change nothing in it, if you were told by God that you were to die tonight? If it is, thank God for it and keep on going; you are on the right road. If it is not, don't wait for God to tell you when or where you will die; he will not tell you. Put things right today, and then you need not worry when your call to judgement comes. Death will be graduation day for the good Christian---not examination day.

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Questions for Community Faith Sharing:

What is it, that I treasure most in my heart?

Am I building my treasures in Heaven or building my treasures here on earth?

What must I do to be vigilant, when Jesus, my master comes?

"Lord, you are faithful even when I fail. Help me to remain faithful to you and to not shrink back when I encounter difficulties. Make me diligent in the exercise of my responsibilities and wise and prudent in the use of my gifts, time and resources."