

# Read

Wisdom 6:12-16

Psalm 63:2, 3-4,  
5-6, 7-8

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18  
or 4:13-14

Matthew 25:1-13

## LIVING THE WORD

### Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 8, 2020



#### REFLECTION

If you were to describe your city to someone, how would you describe it? Maybe you would find pictures online to help show others what they can expect. Or you might talk about events that happen every year. You might describe how friendly the people are or if they have a unique accent. Over the past couple of months, we have heard Jesus using parables to describe the kingdom of heaven. He couldn't show his disciples a picture, but he could paint a picture with words, using images that they were familiar with. In today's Gospel passage, we hear another parable about what heaven is like: it comes unexpectedly but is ready for those prepared to enter into it. It is a joyous place.



#### ACTION

Spend some time this week reflecting on your understanding of heaven. Based on what you know from the past several months of reflecting on Jesus' parables of the kingdom of heaven, write down your description of it and how people should prepare for it. Then modify that description to describe heaven as if you were telling a six-year-old child about it. Essentially, you are writing your own parable. What metaphors would you use to help them understand it? If you have a younger sibling, cousin, or neighbor, talk with them about what heaven is like, using your parable.



Do an online image search for "heaven." How do the results compare to your understanding?

#### ? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ What has shaped your understanding of heaven throughout your life?
- ❖ How does your understanding of heaven influence the choices you make?



November 8, 2020

## THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### LECTIONARY #154A

Wisdom 6:12-16

Psalms 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 or 4:13-14

Matthew 25:1-13

## Prepare for the Word

*The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.*

### Leader's Context

In this week's Gospel, Jesus again uses a parable to teach us about the Kingdom of God. The focus of this parable is about being prepared for the Second Coming of Christ. He tells the story of ten women, five of whom do not bring oil for their lamps, and five of whom bring extra oil for their lamps. When the groom is delayed in reaching the wedding feast, only five have enough oil for their lamps to keep burning. Jesus tells this story to his disciples because he wants his disciples to understand that being ready for Jesus' return and to live the Christian life will come with hardships and difficulties, but it is well worth it.

**Q FOCUS:** *We do not know when Jesus will come again, so we must always be prepared.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week, we celebrate the feast of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini on November 13. She was born in Italy, but later immigrated to the United States and became a citizen. As such, she is the first United States citizen to be canonized. She became the prioress of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and was sent to New York City to help care for the many Italian immigrants living there. She was instrumental in founding many institutions, such as hospitals,

orphanages, and schools, to help immigrants across the United States and in other countries.

### Church Teaching Connection

"That same charity urges us to live more for him who died for us and who rose again (see 2 [Corinthians] 5:15). We make it our aim, then, to please the Lord in all things (see 2 [Corinthians] 5:9) and we put on the armor of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and resist in the evil day (see [Ephesians] 6:11-13). Since we know neither the day nor the hour, we should follow the advice of the Lord and watch constantly so that, when the single course of our earthly life is completed (see [Hebrews] 9:27), we may merit to enter with him into the marriage feast and be numbered among the blessed (see [Matthew] 25:31-46)" (*Lumen gentium*, 48).

## Hear the Word

*Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.*

### Gospel Acclamation

*Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.*

Alleluia, alleluia.

### Gospel

Matthew 25:1-13

**Reader:** A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

**All:** Glory to you, O Lord.

*All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.*

Jesus told his disciples this parable: "The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with

them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.' While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

**Reader:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**All:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

*Everyone may be seated.*

## Reflect on the Word

*When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:*

Maybe you feel as though you are always rushing around, trying to get your backpack packed, your gym/sports bag together, your musical instrument. When we are rushing about and trying to do so many things at once, we often forget something. Sometimes it's minor, but sometimes it is really important, like our homework or a project. Your parents are probably constantly reminding you to "be prepared," and that is what this week's Gospel is about: being prepared.

► Are you someone who prepares ahead of time or who procrastinates until the last minute? Which method works best for you?

In today's parable, those women who brought enough extra oil are called wise, and those who did not bring enough are considered foolish. The foolish women ask the wise women to borrow some of their oil. But they will not share what they have. This seems to be the opposite of Jesus' teaching; aren't we supposed to share what we have with others? Think about it this way, though: you complete your homework on time or finish a project, and a friend wants to copy the work from you. In this case, it is difficult to share with someone else when we have worked diligently to accomplish a task set out before us and sharing would not help the other person learn the material, not to mention copying someone else's work is against the rules.

► What would you do if someone asked to borrow/share something of yours? Would the circumstances matter to you?

In this week's Gospel, Jesus employs the method of teaching a lesson by using a parable. Though this parable is about women remembering to bring enough lamp oil while they wait for the groom to arrive for the wedding feast, Jesus is teaching the disciples that they must always be ready as followers of Jesus. Many early Christians believed that the end time was coming sooner rather than later. Therefore, many followers believed that they must be ready for the Second Coming of Christ and the Final Judgment. As time wore on, people became used to the idea that maybe the Second Coming was not imminent, but the lesson of being alert and ready was deeply etched in the consciousness of Christians. We hear this message often during Advent, which prepares us to remember the coming of Christ at Christmas, as well as his Second Coming at the end of time. From this parable, we learn that if we are not ready, we might be locked out of heaven forever.

► What does it mean to be alert and ready for the Second Coming of Christ? How might you get yourself ready for Jesus' return?

## Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 58.

We can plan ahead or procrastinate in our daily activities, but in the Christian faith, we should always be prepared for Jesus.

What would you say to Jesus when he returns at the end of time to take all the faithful up into heaven?

Why did the virgins who had extra oil refuse to share with the virgins who ran out of oil?

## Act on the Word

### The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like . . .

You will need Bibles, paper, and pens to complete this activity.

Over the past several weeks, we have been hearing Jesus use parables to teach his disciples about the kingdom of heaven. Because heaven is very different from our earthly life, Jesus uses many images to help us understand what it will be like and the characteristics of those who are in heaven. Today, we will be looking at what those various images are and how they help paint a picture of heaven.

Have the teens break into small groups. Each group will look at the following parables:

- ✧ Matthew 18:21-35  
(24th Sunday in Ordinary Time)
- ✧ Matthew 20:1-16a  
(25th Sunday in Ordinary Time)
- ✧ Matthew 21:28-32  
(26th Sunday in Ordinary Time)
- ✧ Matthew 21:33-43  
(27th Sunday in Ordinary Time)
- ✧ Matthew 22:1-10  
(28th Sunday in Ordinary Time)
- ✧ Matthew 25:1-13  
(32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time)

For each parable, the young people will discuss and fill in the following columns.

- ✧ In the first column, they will summarize what the kingdom of heaven is like according to each parable.
- ✧ In the second column, they will note major characters in the story.
- ✧ In the third column, they will observe what the metaphors of the parables represent, for example, a wedding feast represents rejoicing, laborers represent working together, etc.
- ✧ In the fourth column, they will describe what the parable teaches us.

After the young people have had time to discuss these parables, have each group share any insights they gained with the larger group.

## Closing Prayer

*Lord Jesus Christ,  
we await your Second Coming,  
and the chance to eat with you at the  
heavenly banquet.  
May we not be like the foolish bridesmaids,  
forgetting to prepare ourselves for you.  
May we attend to your presence in our life,  
praying and serving you at all times.  
You live and reign with God the Father  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.*

## For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday's Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at [www.ltp.org/lwgr](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.