

**32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time November
12th 2017**

THEME

“BE prepared” is the motto of the boys’ Scouts and the theme of today’s gospel parable about the ten bridesmaids.

Being excluded from a wedding was a real tragedy for the five of them. In those days there were no singles group no office or job where one could meet young single men. A wedding was the only chance for a young girl to meet someone. Being left out of a wedding diminished the chances of marrying soon. But the deeper point of the parable for us is that we can be shut out of the kingdom. And so should be prepared and always ready for the Master’s return.

The center of this parable is the oil. Oil is a vital part of human life then and now. We use it for cooking it is medicinal , it protects the body like sunscreen ,and it is used for painting and lamplight. The church uses oil in four of the sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders and the Sacrament

of the Sick). It represents the gifts of the ,Holy Spirit,the strengthening, healing and enlightening of power of the Holy Spirit)

The tragedy of the parable is that five of the bridesmaids ran out of oil. They had beautiful containers magnificent lamps but they were empty The oil ran out. That's where the parable touches us. Have we run out of oil, the strengthening of God's grace in our lives? The oil of grace enables us to easily speak with God in prayer, to maintain our sense of spiritual dignity no matter what people do to us , and to live our life according to the Gospel rather than be manipulated by popular culture.

The oil ran out through neglect when, for example we don't replenish our spiritual lives ,going through the motions when we say lots of prayers but are never "in prayer" , in communication with the Lord. A crisis often comes when we are not prepared. We can have a beautiful vessel, a great appearance, but we are running on empty. Our spiritual life, our soul is dry. The oil has run out.

We were filled with oil at our Baptism, at our Confirmation and at our marriage or Ordination. Then as time goes on something always comes up that prevent us from praying, and when an important moment comes we are empty. We can run out of oil and empty our soul of spiritual vitality. That is up to us.

Are we prepared for the Master's return? November is a time to think about death. Not to be morbid but to be wise and to focus on what is important in our lives .We prepare for eternity by how we live. A traditional retreat reflection years ago was to imagine ourselves write our own obituary. What would we say were our greatest accomplishments, our greatest loyalties .To whom were we truly faithful? How carefully did we use the gifts given us? Could people rely on us? Were we faithful to our Baptism? Were we a blessing to our Church or a burden? Were we only spiritual consumers? Or did we contribute in any way to the life and work of the Church? Were we Catholic in our life or in name only? Did we live in the freedom of Christ's grace or

**were we enslaved by the attractions of sin?
What would our obituary say? What would we
want to say?**

**As we advert to death and dying in
November we may come to see each day in
our life is a grace, a time to know Jesus Christ
more fully. November leads into Advent in a
few weeks which is a time to prepare for the
coming of Christ at Christmas.AMEN.**