

## Commentary on the Readings for November 12, 2023

### The 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

In recent months, we have heard a great deal about being **prepared**. All media has been after us to be prepared – for hurricanes, floods, tornados and other disasters. However, have you heard anyone say anything about being **prepared to meet your maker**? Usually this phrase applies to condemned criminals or others about to die. The theme of the readings this week is very close to this “meeting your maker” idea, but it is a little more subtle. The emphasis is on the **wisdom** that is required to be truly prepared. The Spirit’s Gift of Wisdom is ours for the asking.

The **First Reading** is from the ***Book of Wisdom (6:12-16)***. The Book of Wisdom is full of good advice for those seeking a deeper relationship with the Lord. Further, for those who think the Bible is all male dominated, the Book of Wisdom should come as a reminder that God is above (transcendent) all gender descriptions. In this book, God is spoken of as female. Here, she encourages us to seek this **gift of wisdom** to be “prudent and keep vigil;” in other words, **be prepared**.

The **Responsorial Psalm (63:2-8)**. This beautiful prayer is said by one who is constantly seeking the Lord in everything he or she does. This is not just a preoccupation, but a genuine desire to follow the Lord every step of the way in life. The spiritually wise person will take counsel from this prayer.

The **Second Reading** is from ***St. Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians (4:13-18)***. The people of Thessalonica were overly concerned about those who were still alive at the time of Christ’s Second Coming, thinking that it would soon happen. Would they be “left behind” when Christ came to take to heaven those who had already died? Paul assures them that everyone will have the same opportunity to get to heaven, provided they have prepared themselves by living their lives according to the teaching of Christ.

The **Gospel Reading** is from ***Matthew (25:1-13)***. In this passage, Jesus tells us the familiar story of the wise and foolish virgins. Unfortunately, many people get caught up in the “virgins” part and don’t hear the last couple of lines in the story. These are all about being prepared, and one of the best ways of being prepared is by having a deep and sincere relationship with Christ. Without this, all other forms of preparedness would be somewhat self-serving. The people in the story who tried to get into the wedding reception (heaven) late in the evening (of life) without being prepared will not gain entry because the bridegroom (Christ) did not get to know them. There was no relationship! We can do much on our own initiative, but all would be of no value if what we have done is not in with the will of God for us. So we are challenged by this reading to ask ourselves if we are working at being prepared to meet our maker. Something to think about during our prayer time this week! **MFB**