



Bringing Home the Word

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
November 19, 2023

“Ready or Not, Here I Come”

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

As children we called out this chant when playing hide-and-seek. However, it could very well describe the message of two of today’s readings. Paul reminds the Thessalonians that “the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night” (1 Thessalonians 5:2). The Gospel tells a story about a man who returns after a long journey and intends to settle accounts with those whom he put in charge of his household. In both instances, the one returning might cry out, “Ready or not, here I come!” The point of each story: Be ready! But how?

Sunday Readings

Proverbs 31:10–13, 19–20, 30–31

Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; / the woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. / Acclaim her for the work of her hands.

1 Thessalonians 5:1–6

You yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night.

Matthew 25:14–30 or 25:14–15, 19–21

[Jesus said,] “It will be as when a man who was going on a journey called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them.”

The Thessalonians are told they “are children of the light” (5:5). The Gospel suggests what that expression might mean—be responsible for what has been given to you.

In the Gospel, some servants fully use the talents given to them. However, one servant buries what he received. If that was not bad enough, that servant alleged fear of the householder as reason for his lack of initiative. If he knew that the householder was as demanding as he stated he was, he should have realized that his master would expect him to use what had been given. There is no excuse here in refusing to use what was given, nor in blaming the householder.

All of us have been given life, talents, and abilities. We are expected to use them. This is what it means to live fully. Surely we Catholics will be excited, not afraid, when the Lord announces, “Ready or not, here I come!” †

Today’s Gospel suggests that we should be responsible for what has been given to us.



A Word from Pope Francis

Above all, let us not forget to thank: if we are bearers of gratitude, the world itself will become better, even if only a little bit, but that is enough to transmit a bit of hope. The world needs hope. And with gratitude, with this attitude of thanksgiving, we transmit a bit of hope.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, ROME,
DECEMBER 30, 2020



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Are you faithful to your responsibilities?
- If not, what is holding you back?

Look Who's Coming to Dinner

Fr. Rick Potts, CSsR

Unlike the meals we read about in the Gospels, in our hurried lives today, meals are more often about nutrients rather than fellowship. Yet every year we fuss over one particular meal when we gather with immediate family and extended family and maybe a few friends. We come together to feast and to give thanks for our blessings.

Jesus used meals to mark significant moments and to teach his disciples valuable lessons. However, he was not very picky about those with whom he ate. In fact, Jesus went out of his way to invite the “wrong sort” of people to dine with him; this was one reason he got into trouble. But repeatedly it was the simple act of breaking bread with someone that produced profound transformation.

Jesus was about the business of receiving and restoring people—not rejecting those seeking salvation. It was



Zacchaeus' encounter with Jesus and the Lord's proclamation that he was going to break bread with him that transformed Zacchaeus. The disciples who had lost hope and were returning to Emmaus recognized Jesus only in the breaking of bread. And at the Last Supper, the most important meal in all of Scripture, Jesus broke bread with those who would

abandon and deny him; he even shared a dish with his betrayer.

Who will be around the table on Thanksgiving? Is there anyone you hope stays away? Anyone you refuse to eat with? Maybe it's someone who wronged you. (How many times are we to forgive our sisters and brothers?) Maybe it's their political ideology or religious beliefs. (Is there not one Lord of all?) Maybe it's someone whose lifestyle makes you uncomfortable. (Are we not all created in the image of our God?) Think about the healing power of simply breaking bread with someone. Imagine the potential transformation wrought simply by imitating Jesus. Can we help build the kingdom just by swallowing our pride before gulping down some turkey? This year, perhaps we can restore this meal to its original purpose and give thanks for ALL the people in our lives. †

Liguorian, April 2009

Thanksgiving: A Holy Day of Opportunity

Joseph D. Slater

Of all our purely national holidays, few have the power to touch us more deeply than does Thanksgiving Day. It is a day filled with religious overtones. Thanksgiving is, in fact, a holiday that comes close to being a holy day. The Vatican recently acknowledged the religious dimensions of this day by authorizing a special Mass for the Church in the United States.

For the Catholic, there is no better way to give thanks than to offer ourselves to God by receiving his Son in the Eucharist. The very word *Eucharist* comes from a Greek verb meaning “to give thanks.”

Thanksgiving should be a holy day. Not a holy day of obligation, but a holy day of opportunity, for on this day when our entire nation pauses for the common purpose of giving thanks, Catholics have a special opportunity to make our response to the God, “from whom all blessings flow.” † *Liguorian*, November 1985



Gracious God, make us mindful of our blessings and increase in us the gift of gratitude which makes possible a generous life of service. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

November 20–25

Monday, Weekday: 1 Mc 1:10–15, 41–43, 54–57, 62–63 / Lk 18:35–43


Tuesday, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary: 2 Mc 6:18–31 / Lk 19:1–10

Wednesday, St. Cecilia: 2 Mc 7:1, 20–31 / Lk 19:11–28

Thursday, Thanksgiving Day: Sir 50:22–24 / 1 Cor 1:3–9 / Lk 17:11–19 or 1 Mc 2:15–29 / Lk 19:41–44

Friday, St. Andrew Dũng-Lạc and Companions: 1 Mc 4:36–37, 52–59 / Lk 19:45–48

Saturday, Weekday: 1 Mc 6:1–13 / Lk 20:27–40

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