

32nd Sun A – 2017 (November 12)

1. Wis 6:12 – 16; 02. 1 Thes 4:13 – 18; 03. Mt 25: 1 – 13

Are you ready to meet the Lord?

St. Mother Teresa always appeared with a smile. Her last days were coupled with poor health and physical suffering. Just a few months before her death, suffering from heart failure, she lay in a hospital bed, unable to speak. She tried to communicate with her caretakers by writing on slips of paper, “I want Jesus.” Holy Mass was celebrated in her hospital room and she was able to receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Her happiness came from being with Christ

Christians are joyful people because they know what is awaiting them. They live on hope and their hope is built on faith in Christ. While living in this world, they prepare themselves for eternal life. This life is only a short journey to the next. St. Paul puts it well in 1 Cor 15:19: **“If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.”** The goal of Christian faith is to possess eternal life with Christ, and therefore Christians do not fear death. They are ready to meet the Lord.

St. Ignatius of Antioch was accused of being a Christian and was thrown to the beasts in Rome. When taken to Rome, hearing the roaring lions, he burned with the desire for martyrdom, and said, **“I am the wheat of Christ: may I be ground by the teeth of beasts that I**

may become pure bread.” He longed to be with the Lord. This is the longing of every Christian. To be with the Lord! St. Paul expresses this desire clearly in his letter to the Philippians: “My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better” (Phil 1:23). The goal of our life is to be with Christ. In today’s second reading, St. Paul teaches about those who have died. He writes: ‘We shall always be with the Lord, and not grieve like those who have no hope.’ We live on hope and our hope will not fail us.

The message in today’s parable concerns the need for watchfulness. Through the parable of the 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins, Jesus teaches clearly the need to be constantly vigilant, alert and ready to meet Him. St. Josemaria Escriva says, “Christianity is not an easy way of life. It is not enough just to be in the church, letting the years roll by.” We are called to be the wise virgins who represent people who are ready to meet the Lord. We need to constantly seek wisdom for guidance. The first reading reminds us: “whoever watches for wisdom at dawn shall not be disappointed.”

We are called to be ready. The teachings of holy Mother church, our worthy participation of the Sacraments, and a strong prayer life help us to be ready to meet the Lord. The Lord will help us in our effort.