

HOMILY 32ND Sunday Ordinary Time
November 8, 2020

What do the majority of people report as their biggest fear? Death. Most of us do not even like to talk about death, but we are drawing near to the end of the Church year so the readings are about the end times. So, we will talk about death today. If we believe what we say we believe, death should not be so scary. We hear in the second reading that we will always be with the Lord. Our own death is merely a transition to eternal life with the Lord. In that sense, our own death is not really a death at all. We do experience the death of someone we love much differently. We must grieve the loss of someone we love and it is painful and it takes years. There is no time limit on grief. But we must grieve as a people of faith. We are only separated for a short time. We maintain our individual identity after death and we will recognize our loved ones. We will be able to spend all eternity with the people that we love. But we do need to be prepared.

There was a man who told his son about six months before he died that he was not afraid to die. He said: “I lived a good life, I am good with my relationships with family and friends, I have no regrets, and I am at peace with God.” How many of you would like to be able to say that at the time of your death? I think we all can, but we have to prepare long before the time of your death.

We hear a parable in the Gospel reading today. The 10 virgins represent all of us. The return of the bridegroom is the second coming of Jesus Christ or being face to face with God at the time of death. The oil represents the grace we have accumulated during our life. The wise virgins were those who had enough oil to light their lamps. The foolish virgins were the ones who did not prepare for the future. As the foolish virgins could not borrow oil, as we cannot borrow grace. We need to accumulate it on ourselves by living a Christian life and receiving the Sacraments. On the last day the time has run out. On the last day you will stand before the Lord alone as you are. You cannot ride through on someone else's grace. "My mother was a saint. She prayed for me every day." "Good for her. Maybe you should have followed her example." "My wife was very involved in the Church. I was too busy earning a living." "Sorry, you will be leaving all of that behind. It never belonged to you anyway; you just had it on loan."

I think today is a good day for each of us to take a look at our lives and see how things are going. I am going to ask you to close your eyes, relax, and listen to a series of questions. When you hear one that resonates with you, I want you to stay with that question. Are you living a good life? Are you using your gifts and abilities, the things you have accomplished to help others? Are you just accumulating things for yourself? What do you spend the majority of your time

doing each day? Is it what you want to be spending the majority of your time doing? Are you doing what God is calling you to do? Is it time to make some changes? Is your life a source of goodness? Is the world a better place because you are in it? How have you treated the people in your life? Are there people you need to forgive? Are there people you need to ask for forgiveness? Are there people you need to attempt to reconcile with? Are your relationships life-giving? Are there people you could have, should have helped? Are there people you have undervalued or sold short? Do you look for the good in the people that you meet? If you were to die today, would you have any regrets? If so, name them. What do you need to change in your life so that you no longer have those regrets? What do you need to do to make things right? Are you at peace with God? How well do you know God? Do you need to get to know him better? How are you going to do this? Do you need to spend more time praying with scripture? Do you need to spend more time with God in prayer? Can you say: "I lived a good life, I am good with my relationships with family and friends, I have no regrets, and I am at peace with God." If not, what do you need to do to prepare?