

HOMILY FOR 32ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Matthew 2017

1. Story of 5 foolish and 5 wise virgins at first seems sort of unchristian
 - a. Should the wise virgins have been more generous?
 - b. Jesus is very practical in stories.
 - c. Oil lamps be rather useless at a wedding feast if everybody runs sort of oil
 - d. Jesus is raising a point about being prepared for the unexpected
2. Recent events have reminded us unexpected dangers
 - a. last week, the tragedy of the church killings,
 - b. as listening to news, one comment that struck me
 - c. people were saying, we thought we were safe here
 - i. Small church in a small community, everybody knows each other
 - d. Suddenly a man comes in with guns and ammunition, kills almost indiscriminately
 - i. even sought out children crying and making noise
 - e. the church event is just the latest of unexpected dangers
 - i. We had the Vegas killings at country music festival
 - ii. Hurricanes and fires
3. Most difficult thing about all these events is the surprise element
 - a. If we do not expect something to happen, how can we prepare for it
 - b. We feel a general sense of insecurity and fear
 - c. There are a lot of foolish solutions
 - i. If we had enough guns, could we protect ourselves from murderers
 - ii. Natural disasters, can we find safe place to live
 - iii. Maybe a strong man who claims he can protect us from everything
 - d. Common element with the parable is the sense of insecurity
 - i. Just like the virgins did not know when the groom would arrive
 - ii. We can never be sure of our security
 - iii. Whether the church killer, the country music killer in Vegas, the hurricanes in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, the fires in California, Montana and the West in general
4. Jesus is telling us in Gospel we need to be prepared
 - a. Oil of the wise virgins is really about wisdom
 - b. 1st reading personifies wisdom
 - c. Wisdom is someone ready to be found by anyone looking for her
 - d. She will be sitting at the gate, if we are pursuing her
 - e. We learn that in Confirmation, that Wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit
 - f. Wisdom is the prudence of knowing that God is with us

- g. Trusting as St. Paul tries to tell the Thessalonians, there is something more than the present and the visible
- 5. Wisdom does not mean that we are protected from the unexpected and the fearful
 - a. As Jesus emphasizes in the parable, the groom is delayed for both the wise and the foolish
 - b. Wisdom is the light of faith that gives us the strength to endure the unexpected
 - c. But Wisdom is not automatic, it is a gift that needs to be developed and nurtured
 - d. Otherwise it is like oil for a lamp that we forget at home when we need it in the world
- 6. Wisdom is nurtured by faith and by love
 - a. In prayer, both alone and at Mass, we develop and nurture and awareness that God is present and caring for us
 - b. In reaching out to our neighbors in need, we experience love its real form
- 7. As we live out the gift of wisdom in our daily lives, we are more likely to be ready for the unexpected
 - a. The more real God is for us, the more likely we will experience his wisdom guiding us through the fearful parts of life.
 - b.