

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C

(Wisdom 18:6-9; Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19; Luke 12:32-48)

Excerpts of Pope Francis - Angelus - 07 August 2022

by Father Charles Fillion

10 August 2025

Brothers and sisters, today, Jesus wants to reassure the disciples about every fear and to invite them to be vigilant. He addresses two fundamental exhortations to them: the first is, “Do not be afraid, little flock” (Lk 12:32); the second is, “Be dressed for action” (cf. v. 35). In other words, “Fear not” and “Be ready”. They are two key words for conquering the fears that paralyse us at times, and to overcome the temptation of a passive, slumbering life.

First of all, Jesus encourages the disciples. He has just finished speaking to them about the loving and provident care of the Father, who cares for the lilies of the fields and the birds of the air, and therefore, all the more for his children. So there is no need to worry, for our story is firmly in God’s hands. We are encouraged by Jesus’ invitation not to be afraid. Indeed, at times we feel imprisoned by a feeling of distrust and anxiety. It is the fear of failure, of not being acknowledged and loved, the fear of not being able to accomplish our plans, of never being happy, and so on. And so, we scramble to look for solutions, to find a space in which to emerge, to accumulate goods and wealth, to obtain security. And how do we end up?

We end up living anxiously and constantly worrying. Instead, Jesus reassures us: Do not be afraid! Trust in the Father who wants to give you all you truly need. He has already given you his Son, his Kingdom, and he always accompanies you with his providence, taking care of you every day. Fear not: this is the certainty that your hearts should be attached to!

But knowing that the Lord watches over us with love does not entitle us to slumber, to let ourselves succumb to laziness! On the contrary, we must be alert, vigilant. Indeed, to love means being attentive to the other, being aware of his or her needs, being available to listen and welcome, being ready.

Yes, *Be ready*. This is the second invitation today. This is Christian wisdom. Jesus repeats this invitation several times, and today he does so through three short parables, centred on the master of a house who, in the first, returns unexpectedly from a wedding banquet; in the second, does not want to be surprised by thieves; and in the third, returns from a long journey. The message in all of them is this: that it is necessary to *be awake*, not to fall asleep, that is, not to be distracted, not to give in to inner idleness, because the Lord comes even in situations in which we do not expect him.

To be attentive to the Lord, not to fall asleep. We need to be alert.

And at the end of our life, he will call us to account for the goods he has entrusted to us. Therefore, being vigilant also means *being responsible*, that is, safeguarding and administering those goods faithfully. We have received so much: life, faith, family, relationships, work, but also the places where we live, our city, creation. We have received so many things. Do we take care of this inheritance the Lord has left us? Do we safeguard its beauty or do we use things only for ourselves and for our immediate convenience? We have to think a little about this: are we guardians of all that has been given to us?

Brothers and sisters, let us walk without fear, in the certainty that the Lord accompanies us always. And let us stay awake in case we be asleep when the Lord passes by. Saint Augustine used to say, “I am afraid that the Lord will pass by and I will not notice”.

Just to be a little clearer, Jesus is not only talking about when God will us home to heaven. Every day God speaks to us. Everyday God shows us his love in many ways. No, we don't have to be reading the Bible or going to daily mass to hear God speak. He speaks through other people, through events, through his creation. He shows us also his love, yes through the mass, through the eucharist and the other sacraments. Again, he shows his love through people, through events, and even through his creation. Do not be asleep, otherwise, you will not notice the Lord passing by.

May this Eucharist help us not to fear, not to be afraid and to be alert, be “dressed for action”, “be ready” in welcoming the Lord's visit.