



AMDG
32ND SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME
YEAR A
12TH NOVEMBER 2017



Stay awake! Be ready!

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and merciful God,
graciously keep us from all adversity,
so that, unhindered in mind and body alike,
we may pursue in freedom of heart
the things that are yours.

Amen.

As we draw near to the end of the liturgical year, the readings are concerned with the end of time when Christ Jesus will return again and God's kingdom will reign. We are reminded to stay awake, to be ready to notice when and where God is present among us now.

The *First Reading* describes the beauty of Wisdom who seeks to comfort, strengthen and console those who look for her help in troubles and anxiety.

When God may seem distant, we cry out to the Lord with the *Psalmist*. We recall with praise the glory and strength that has helped us, and rejoice in the shelter of his loving presence.

The *Second Reading* tells us we can be quite sure that those who have died are risen with Jesus, so that we can be comforted by this hope, for them and for ourselves. At the end, we will all be with the Lord forever.

The Lord Jesus will come again but we must be patient, keeping the flame of our love and faith alive in our hearts. We may tire of waiting for him, but must be ready to wake up quickly to answer his call. We do not know the day or hour of his coming (*Gospel*).

This week, I pray to stay awake, ready to notice the presence of the Lord. In keeping close to him, I may lead others to a sense of the hope and faith we have, both in joy and when our lives are difficult.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 62 (63)

R./ For you my soul is thirsting, O God, my God.

O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.

My body pines for you
like a dry, weary land without water.

So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.
For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise.

So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I shall lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you.
On you I muse through the night
for you have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.

As I come to pray, I take time to find stillness of mind and body.
I do not rush. I ask the Holy Spirit to help me as I pray.

Reading the psalm slowly, allowing its words and emotions to resonate within me, I make the psalmist's prayer my own.

Perhaps I notice the heart-felt longing of the psalmist.

I may like to express my own longings to the Lord, in the words of the psalm or in my own words.

What do I really want? I speak with the Lord.

My attention may be drawn to the joy of the psalmist: his whole body expresses a prayer of praise – lips, hands, mouth; he is filled 'as with a banquet'. What images come to mind from these verses?

I share them with the Lord.

Perhaps I, too, allow my body to express my joy.

Eventually I come to rest 'in the shadow of his wings', remaining quietly present before the Lord for a while. Slowly I end my prayer with words of gratitude.

'So I will bless you all my life ... I rejoice!'

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 25: 1–13

Jesus told this parable to his disciples: “The kingdom of heaven will be like this: Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were sensible; the foolish ones did take their lamps, but they brought no oil, whereas the sensible ones took flasks of oil as well as their lamps. The bridegroom was late, and they all grew drowsy and fell asleep. But at midnight there was a cry, “The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him.” At this, all those bridesmaids woke up and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish ones said to the sensible ones, “Give us some of your oil: our lamps are going out.” But they replied, “There may not be enough for us and for you; you had better go to those who sell it and buy some for yourselves.” They had gone off to buy it when the bridegroom arrived. Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding hall and the door was closed. The other bridesmaids arrived later. “Lord, Lord,” they said, “open the door for us.” But he replied, “I tell you solemnly, I do not know you.” So stay awake, because you do not know either the day or the hour.’

This week, I ponder this parable. It may take several days to explore the richness of Jesus’s words. In whatever way I am drawn to pray, I allow the Holy Spirit to guide me.

I may like to picture myself as one of the bridesmaids, or perhaps as someone waiting with them. Noticing what happens as the story unfolds, allowing myself to be drawn into the events, I share my thoughts and feelings with the Lord as I am moved.

What does it mean for me to wait? Am I patient and prepared for whatever may happen? Or am I anxious, tending to give up or to sort everything out in my own way?

I talk with the Lord about these moments in my life.

What has the Lord to say to me?

What happens when I hear the cry, ‘The bridegroom is here!’? I may visualise the joy, the agitation, the different reactions of the girls. Am I ready to meet the Lord as he comes to me in my life? Again, I speak with the Lord from my heart, and listen to what he says to me.

I end my time of prayer asking the Lord for whatever grace I need. ’

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

I slept but my heart was awake.

Song of Songs 5: 2

Wisdom is bright and does not grow dim.
By those who love her, she is readily seen,
and found by those who look for her.

First reading

O God, you are my God, for you I long.
For your love is better than life.

Responsorial Psalm

The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him.

Gospel

This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:

*Wisdom 6: 12–16, Psalm 62 (63), 1 Thessalonians 4: 13–18,
Matthew 25: 1–13*



**The sensible ones
took flasks of oil
as well as their
lamps.**

Matthew 25: 3



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