

32ND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Wisdom 6:12-16 1 Thess. 4:13-18 Matt 25: 1-13

This Month of November, and particularly today, is time when we recall with an act of memory, the War Dead: those who gave their lives for the livelihood of others. Our experience of the heavy losses the world has suffered through the COVID 19 Virus brings home the importance of having a period to remember. We remember because we want to be inspired by those men and women who were front liners on battle fields but also this year on the battlefields of the NHS and the many Care Homes in our country. Characteristic to these men and women is that they who did not waste time for action. We are what we are today because of the selflessness of those that defended and protected our lives.

The parable of the Ten virgins helps us to value and pay attention to the here and now.

It helps us to learn not to waste time, not to waste opportunities at our disposal.

To live to the full in the here and now is the mission of all believers. Whether the Groom arrives early or late, it will not matter if he has continually been part of my everyday life. What we learn from the fallen heroes is well featured in the preparedness of the Five Wise Virgins. A sense of expectancy and hope must always be in the forefront. Through the parable of Our Lord, readiness and staying alert, these, ought to be the fabric of our lives – of every believer.

The foolishness of the five virgins was not only that they forgot to bring oil for their lamps, but they ignored and postponed their 'here-and-now.' They were obsessed by the assumption of the 'Not-Yet!' They did not cease the opportunity of the moment to get ready. They preferred not to see what it was they needed to do there and then. Jesus warns us that the present moment is the right time. Beyond the present time it will be too late.

When Jesus talks about being alert in the parable of the Ten Virgins he is urging us to cease every opportunity to access the oil 'of faith.' Without that oil of faith our lamps are bound to go out.

Commenting on staying alert Saint Augustine said, "*Beware of the grace of God that passes and does not return.*" We need to perceive God's presence in the little things of each day and never let the opportunity to love and serve him pass us by. Our faith must be ready and watching out for him.

If we take him for granted, or presume that we are already saved, we can miss our chance to be with him.

We are all urged not remain superficial.

We are urged to utilise the present moment and try to discover the call of God even in the smallest things of life.

Let us be a people who go on ceasing the opportunity of the moment!