

Nineteenth Sunday of O.T
August 7: OLP

An unskilled worker goes for a job interview and demands a pay higher than that demanded by skilled workers. When asked why he demands so much for his unskilled work he explains that because he is new to the job, so he would put in more effort and time than the skilled workers to do the same job. Therefore, he should be paid more. This is certainly an unusual way of reasoning. Booker T. Washington echoed a similar sentiment when he said, "I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which one has overcome while trying to succeed." All these statements may or may not look unreasonable for us but one definite reasonable thing is that we need to depart from this world when our time comes and certainly it will. Are we ready?

The gospel today reminds us that we need to be faithful and be vigilant with our lives every moment of our time. In the Parable of the Watchful Servants, Jesus encourages his disciples to be vigilant and ready for action as they wait for the coming of the Master. That he will come is certain, but when he will come no one knows. The Lord comes unexpectedly into our lives everyday through events and people we meet. We should be watchful to recognize the Lord and prepared to meet him in the little unexpected opportunities of everyday life. This is the best way to prepare for the ultimate encounter with the Lord when we face him after our earthly pilgrimage.

Normally when we think of being ready, we usually think of being prepared for the worst that could happen: locks on the door in case of thieves, life jackets in the event of a boat accident. Isn't it interesting that most of us believe in preparation

for many uncertainties, but not with the most important event of our lives? We have insurance in preparation for a theft, fire trucks in preparation for a fire. Airline stewards provide pre-flight instruction in preparation for turbulent weather and we seek education in preparation for a good job. Preparation in our society is a sign of wisdom. But think about this. Of all the preparations that we make for the things I just mentioned, not a single one is a certainty – yet we feel compelled to prepare ourselves for them.

The return of Jesus is a certainty. We can never know precisely when he will return or when we will die, but his return is certain. We must constantly watch, being always faithful and ready so that we may be found worthy to share in the heavenly banquet he has prepared for us. So the question of the parable is not whether or not Christ is coming again, or when he is coming, or even how he is coming. The point is about being prepared for his coming and ready to receive him whenever he comes, now or later. In the road of life which we follow, there are many uncertainties and distractions. We don't know where the road will take us; we don't know when it will end. But one thing is certain. At the end of life's journey; our Lord will be there to meet us, to welcome us into the heavenly kingdom...IF we have prepared ourselves. Preparation cannot be a "sometime" thing, but living each moment of our life for Jesus. If we can do that, we will be prepared to greet our Master whenever comes. How is this preparation to be undertaken? First is to keep Jesus and his teaching constantly before our eyes. For it is only our prayerful remembrance of God's presence among us and of the promise of the Kingdom that will protect us from the fatal distractions that lead us to live by the world's standards and to be found unprepared when the Lord comes for us. Secondly, let us be faithful to the life and words of Jesus as we await the end time, His second coming. Despite criticisms, rejection, pain and suffering, let us remain faithful to

the Love of the Father as Jesus did. Let us faithfully fulfill the mission entrusted to us, that is, to proclaim God's reign to all. God loves faithfulness and rewards those who are faithful to Him.