

# Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wis., 18:6-9; Ps., 33:1, 12, 18-22; Heb., 11:1-2, 8-9 & Lk., 12:32-48

Fr. Azam *Vianney* Mansha, CJM - STL

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

When St. Pope John XXIII initiated the process of Vatican II, he proposed the process of discernment known as SEE, JUDGE and ACT. It seems that St. Pope John XXIII might have learned this way of discernment through today's three parables:

1. The Wedding Banquet and the Servant (vv. 35-38)
2. The Arrival of the Thief (vv. 39-40)
3. The Faithful and Unfaithful Servants' Attitude (vv. 41-48)

In the first parable, "The Wedding Banquet and the Servant," the servant has to SEE the way of his master; in the second parable, "The Arrival of the Thief," the master has to JUDGE the arrival of the thief in order to guard his property; and in the third parable, "The Faithful and Unfaithful Servants' Attitude," the faithful servant has to ACT according to the instructions of his master. Indeed, each parable speaks in volumes about the second coming of Jesus, in order to get ready for His second coming. We need three steps to get ready for the second coming of Jesus, and that is, to see, to judge, and to act. Let's explore each one separately in order to see the Biblical meaning of the three parables. We begin with the first step:

- TO SEE. "To see," or in other words, "to observe," is a way a person sees the possibilities of doing things for the Lord. Throughout the Life of Jesus, we can see that Jesus gave ample instructions on the importance of seeing the possibilities to participate in the Kingdom of God. For example, in "The Parable of the Talents" (Matthew 25:14-30), two servants were praised because they saw the possibilities to multiply the talents whereas the third servant was punished for his laziness. Indeed, "to see" is a way to appreciate the goodness of the Lord within us and around us. Now we move on to the second step, and that is, "to judge."
- TO JUDGE. "To judge" is not to condemn, biblically speaking, it is "to be prudent." It is a way to use our abilities to respond according to the need of the times. Once again, throughout His ministry, Jesus emphasised the need "to judge" or "to be prudent" for the mission. For example, see "The Parable of the Ten Virgins" (Matthew 25:1-13). There are five virgins who were prudent; they carried oil for their lamps, and as a result, they got to enter the wedding banquet with the Son of Man, whereas the other five virgins who did not act prudently were denied entrance into the wedding banquet. Now we move on to the last step, and that is, "to act."

- TO ACT. Once we have seen and judged ourselves and our surroundings, we then have to act upon them because “actions speak louder than words.” The actions are not merely movements; for Christians, they are expressions of faith.

In putting together these three steps (to see, to judge and to act), we are actually called “to be watchful.” St. Paul helps us to understand that this act of watchfulness is to preach the Word of God “in season” and “out of season” (2 Timothy 4:2).

During one of my home visits to Pakistan, Mama entered my room while I was still asleep after her early morning walk. I do not know where she got a small stick! She entered my room and started poking me with the stick! I asked Mama, “What happened Mama?” She told me, “Get up! Get up!” Again, I asked her, “Mama, what happened?” Once again, she said, “Get up! Get up! What kind of priest are you? Get up! Don’t you know that priests get up early in the morning to pray. Get up!” I replied while getting out of my bed, “Mama, I am on holiday.” Mama once again said, “Get up! Don’t you know that priests are never on holidays. During the mission, you evangelize the church and during holidays, you evangelize your family. Therefore, you are not on holiday! Only your geographical situation has changed, but your mission remains to evangelize people.” I said to myself, “Wow! What a great lesson Mama has taught me!” I immediately got up and offered the Holy Mass with Mama.

Dear sisters and brothers, whether we are teachers or students, married or priests, single or separated, working or struggling in life, we are all called to see the goodness of the Lord. We are all called to be prudent in carrying the Gospel values and to always act upon them with complete watchfulness, either “in season” or “out of season.”

May Mary, the mother of Jesus and our mother, intercede for us to always see, judge, and act for the Kingdom of God in order to be watchful for the Second Coming of Christ.