

Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis
Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Nov. 14-15, 2020, Cycle A

St. Paul in his First Letter to the Thessalonians says: "... the day of the Lord will come like a thief at night." But Paul reminds the Thessalonians and us: "But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness for that day to overtake you like a thief. For all of you are children of light..." "Therefore let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us stay alert and sober."

St. Paul echoes the Gospel passage we heard last weekend from Matthew of the 10 virgins--5 foolish and 5 wise.

Jesus warned us always to be prepared like the 5 wise virgins who brought oil for their lamps, for we know not when the bridegroom will arrive. Jesus said: "Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

And how do we stay sober and alert as both Paul and Jesus exhort us to do? Jesus answers that question with the parable of the talents we hear from Matthew's Gospel this weekend; again coming from Jesus' eschatological discourse about the end times!

We stay sober and alert by using the talents God has blessed us to help the Kingdom of God grow and increase – in other words to be busy living out the talents of the Gospel Jesus has blessed each and every one of us with. And God does not expect all of us to produce the same yield for His Kingdom – we have all been blessed with talents according to our abilities. No matter what or how much we've been blessed with, Jesus expects to use well our talents for God's Kingdom – our talents of abilities, treasure and time. If we do nothing with what we have, then Jesus warns us, we very well may find ourselves thrown into the darkness outside, just like the foolish virgins of last week who refused to stock up on oil beforehand.

This weekend is Intention Weekend for annual Archdiocesan "United Catholic Appeal, Christ our Hope." Stewardship, both on the parish and diocesan levels, is all about how well I use my talents for increase for God's Kingdom.

This weekend we are asked to return our UCA Stewardship Intention Cards. Last Sunday, with our Gospel of the 10 virgins, we recalled that the lamp each carried was our baptism, and Christ was the Light who lit our lamps. Our good deeds of time, abilities and treasure are the fuel that keeps that Light of Christ burning brightly. Each one of us needs to ask, how am I going to keep the Light of Christ shining brightly through me?

Over these past many years, through the sharing of our blessings with the United Catholic Appeal, we have helped many who lack the basic necessities for life through Catholic Charities; we have enabled the education of future priests and deacons, and helped with the care of retired priests; through our diocesan Catholic Education ministry, we have helped fund student centers on college campuses, support our over 67 Catholic schools and helped with resources for our catechists to teach the faith to our children. Through our archdiocesan Respect Life Office, we have helped young mothers to choose life instead of abortion. The many ministries of our archdiocese are all made possible through our generosity with the blessings God has given each of us.

Finally, I and the Archbishop want to thank all of you for your generosity with both our diocesan and parish ministries, especially in these trying economic times with the pandemic and COVID-19. As you return your UCA Intention Card, please consider how God has blessed you in and through Jesus, and how you might use those blessings to produce an increase in the yield for God's Kingdom.