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Thursday's Gospel: Watching with our Heart and with Deeds

Gospel for Thursday in the 21st
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 24:42-51*)

“Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready;

for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time?

Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eats and drinks with the drunken, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will punish him, and put him with the hypocrites; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.”

Commentary

With his Passion drawing near, Jesus challenges his listeners with a key question: where are you going in life? What truly motivates you? He uses examples that are readily understood by everyone, speaking about householders, thieves and servants. In this life we have possessions that someone might want to steal from us. Everyone who owns property or runs a business knows the importance of looking after their assets, being attentive and protecting against possible causes of ruin. If an owner does not protect what belongs to him or does nothing to ensure that his employees work well and responsibly, it means that his belongings and business do not matter much to him. One strives for what he loves.

Jesus applies these examples to souls. We all have a very great treasure: we have been created, out of love, in God's image and likeness. We have

been called to be his children, and Christ has shed every drop of his blood for us. We are beloved by God and enriched with many gifts, able to share in God's life and contribute to building up the human family. But there is someone who wants to rob us and separate us from God and our neighbors. Someone who wants to enter our heart and empty it of everything great and noble, filling it with petty and selfish ambitions suggested, directly or indirectly, by someone who presents himself as an angel of light offering apparently great things but which, in the end, are revealed to be chaff swept away by the wind.

Jesus speaks to us about indolence and hypocrisy. And he asks us: are you interested in what I am offering you? Do you truly value it? Do you safeguard it? Do you show your love for it with deeds? To watch is to truly love what God is offering us. To

watch is to deepen in our knowledge of the treasures we have received. To watch is to cultivate them, fumigating and pruning when necessary. Doing so with the eagerness of the farmer waiting for the harvest, so that our Lord may always find us with our heart enkindled with love. It is the desire of our heart shown in deeds that God listens to: there is the moment of our salvation, in the today and now that I have in my hands.

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