

**READINGS AND REFLECTION
FOR THE 33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of Proverbs 31:10-13; 19-20, 30-31

Give her a share in what she has worked for.

A perfect wife – who can find her?
She is far beyond the price of pearls.
Her husband's heart has confidence in her,
From her he will derive no little profit.
Advantage and not hurt she brings him all the days of her life.
She is always busy with wool and with flax.
She does her work with eager hands.
She sets her hands to the distaff (*a tool used in spinning*),
Her fingers grasp the spindle.
She holds out her hand to the poor.
She opens her arms to the needy.
Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty.
The woman who is wise is the one to praise.
Give her a share in what her hands have worked for
and let her works tell her praises at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 127:1-5

O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper.

HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO FEAR THE LORD.

Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house;
Your children like shoots of the olive, around your table.

HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO FEAR THE LORD.

Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion in a happy Jerusalem
all the days of your life.

HAPPY ARE THOSE WHO FEAR THE LORD.

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians 5:1-6

The day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night..

You will not be expecting us to write anything to you, brothers, about 'times and seasons', since you know very well that the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. It is when people are saying, 'How quiet and peaceful it is that the worst suddenly happens, as suddenly as labour pains come on a pregnant woman; and there will be no way for anybody to evade it.

But is not as if you live in the dark, my brothers, for that Day to overtake you like a thief. No, you are all sons of light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to darkness, so we should not go on sleeping, as everyone else does, but stay wide awake and sober.

The Word of the Lord.

Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord; My branches bear much fruit John 15: 4,5

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 25:14-30

Because you have been faithful over a few things, enter into the joy of the Lord.

Jesus told this parable to his disciples:

‘The kingdom of heaven is like a man on his way abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to a third one; each in proportion to his ability. Then he set out.

The man who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The man who had received two made two more in the same way. But the man who had receive one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

Now a long time after, the Master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them.

The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. “Sir,” he said, “you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master’s happiness.”

Next, the man with the two talents came forward. “Sir,” he said, “you entrusted me with two talents. Here are two more that I have made.” His master said to him. “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have shown you can be faithful in small things. I will trust you with greater. Come and join in your master’s happiness.”

Last came forward the man who had one talent. “Sir,” said he, “I had heard you were a hard man reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered. So I was afraid, and I went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here it is. It was yours, you have it back,”

But the master answered him, “You wicked and lazy servant! So you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered? Well then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have recovered my capital with interest. So now, take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the five talents. For to everyone who has will be given more, and he will have more, and he will have more than enough.

But from the man who has not, even what he has will be taken away. As for the good-for-nothing servant, throw him out into the dark where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTION

220 000 Australians replied to this question the **Plenary Council** wants to address:

HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA?

Their replies were sorted into six themes:

1. Missionary and Evangelising

How can we proclaim the Gospel in new ways and respond to pastoral needs?

2. Inclusive, Participatory and Synodal

How can clergy and lay people including women, people with diverse cultural backgrounds and people with disabilities share roles in the Church’s ministries, responsibilities and governance?

3. Prayerful and Eucharistic

How can our preaching, our connecting Scripture to daily life, our prayer life and the wisdom of our indigenous and migrant communities help how we participate in our Liturgies?

4. Humble, Healing and Merciful

How can we respond in outreach and prayer given the sexual abuse crisis, and our need to care for the whole of creation?

5. A Joyful, Hope-filled and Servant Community

How can we learn from good people in the Church and beyond to support people at risk?

6. Open to Conversion, Renewal and Reform

In ongoing conversion, may we encounter God, renew our prayer, commune with one another, grow in our vocations and develop in our governance and leadership.

Pope Francis calls for conversion and reform within the Church, not just by looking at ourselves but by responding to the needs of the marginalised and indeed of the whole of creation.

Plenary Council 2021-22 is a chance for Catholics to listen to and to talk to one another and to God and help shape the future of the Church in Australia.



