

WILL I BE FOUND WORTHY TO ENTER HEAVEN? 2023

Jesus is warning us to ensure that our hearts and souls are full of divine grace and repentance, when He eventually comes to call us out of this world. In today's Gospel (Matt 25:1-13) the empty and full flasks cleverly symbolise the state and condition of our souls, whether they are empty or full of faith. The Church provides the Wisdom, and like a lighted Lamp, directs us on the right road to Heaven. Virginity symbolises the time we were spiritually born as pure and sinless children of God in baptism. Many baptised people 'carry' the identity of Catholicism, yet, they never go to Mass or repent for their sins. The Eucharist should be the source and summit of our lives because it is the source of our faith and holiness, which is required to get through the door of Heaven. It's important that we fill our hearts and souls (flasks) with the Eucharist or else our souls will spiritually starve and die within us and not make it to Heaven. Like the oil, our faith should never run out or go dim (Wisdom 6:12). The purpose of Christian faith, is to enable us to always produce the bright flame of faith, holiness, kindness, charity, mercy and love, in the service of God, and neighbour. The renouncing of self for the benefit of others, comes at a cost. Our commitment and loyalty and repentance to God has to be physically lived, and cannot be given away to others. The grace which the sensible virgins possessed, could not be transferred, because they purchased the 'oil' with their lives. It has to be earned. Each person has to do this for themselves.

ONLY THE FAITHFUL ENTER HEAVEN

The foolish virgins thought they could use somebody else's faith, when they realised they had none left themselves. They realised, after it was too late, that only faithful and repentant souls gain entry into eternal communion with Christ, the Bridegroom, in Heaven. Returning to fill their flasks, means that they left it too late to repent and change their lives. This is symbolised by the *trimming of the lamp*, which woke them up from *the drowsiness of sin*, and bringing them to their senses. Sin extinguishes the flame of faith, blinding us to the presence of the Bridegroom and the need to repent. The oil of faith and grace, must always be soaked in good works and the repentance for our sins. The most chilling reality in the whole Gospel, is when the returning unprepared virgins, knocked on the Door of Heaven, and Jesus said: '*I do not know you*'. This is because they were still empty of faith. Jesus is making it clear that we do not automatically go to Heaven, if we have not practiced His faith on earth. The Devil has deceived the world into believing that there is no Judgement Day. St. Paul tells us (1Thess 4:13-18), that we have to *have lived and died in Jesus, in order for God to bring us with Him to Heaven*. To have full Faith, is to accept and live by the full Teachings of the Church, as taught by Jesus Christ. When Christ comes to take us out of this world, our hearts must be found 'full of grace'. To possess a lamp empty of oil, is to be a Catholic empty of faith. God bless, Fr. Brendan.