

**YOU ALSO MUST BE READY - Biblical Commentary by F. Alberto Maggi OSM**

**Lk 12.32-48**

***At that time, Jesus said to his disciples, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.***

***"Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."***

***Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?" And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, 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 cut him in pieces and put him with the unfaithful.***

***And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.***

All Gospels provide an Eucharistic frame. What does this mean? Eucharist is the center of the action, of thought and theological line of the evangelist, for Eucharist is important, precious and essential for growth and life of Christian communities.

In the Gospel of this Sunday there's a precious pearl through which Luke explains what Eucharist is. What is it though?

Eucharist is not a worshipping action that believers offer to God, but is rather the very moment when the community accepts a God who offers himself to them. Let's see what the evangelist says in this very important passage, where Jesus invites us to fully trust the Father, whereas it also introduces Eucharist. Jesus invites to "*stay dressed for action*", which means service and availability.

He also says "*«and be like men who are waiting for their master»*", expressed by the Greek word *Kyriion*, "*«to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks»*". Well, says the Evangelist, "*«Blessed»*", meaning fully happy, "*«are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes»*".

So those who are awake when the master comes – and they are not servants, but those who voluntarily devote their life for others' sake – Jesus defines them 'blessed'. Why? Logic would say: if the master comes back home and finds his servants still awake he will ask them to serve him. No, this is the great change brought by Jesus, "*«Truly, I say to you»*", so he's going to state something very important, "*«he will dress himself for service»*".

We said that dressing up is a sign of service. Well, God, the Lord, is the one who always displays this characteristic of service, not like a master who wants others to serve him, but as a lord who serves in order to allow all those feeling servants to feel free, instead.

"*«And have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them»*". That's what Eucharist is: the essential, precious and beautiful moment when the community formed by all those who freely devote their lives to others, are rested by the Lord who passes by to serve them, that is recharging them with his same vital energy, conveying them his own life.

This is the sense of Eucharist.

And Jesus continues, "*«If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants!»*" That is, the attitude of a believer is always that of service. Where service is present, the Lord acts through his Spirit. Whom serves others God conveys his energies.

But there's Peter who is worried, as usual, and asks "*«Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?»*" that is "all shall serve or just we have to?" So Jesus addresses a question to Peter but

to the entire community also, “*«Who is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time?»*”, note that this doesn’t mean that someone rules over someone else for in the Christian community all are equals.

So Jesus is not putting someone over others, but entrusts someone to convey life to others. This is the teaching for believers. Through Eucharist the Lord turns himself into bread in order to allow those who welcome him to turn themselves into bread for others, too.