

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Aug 26th 2011

THE parable of the ten bridesmaids who go out to wait for the bridegroom to come to the bride's house with their oil lamps. It was the custom for the bridegroom to party with his friends and then come sometime in the night to collect his bride and take her to his own house with her bridesmaids lighting the way. Five have oil for their lamps and five don't-ridiculous. If you had that honor, not to know that it could be a long wait, or a short one revealed you as insensitive, not really concerned about the wedding at all. When the moment comes they run off to try at the last minute to get oil-while the procession would have proceeded without them. They come to the locked door and aren't allowed in-they missed their chance! The words are harsh: "Truly, I do not know you." How much oil do we have in our lamps: the oil of gladness, the oil of chrism from our baptisms and confirmations; the oil of prayer and almsgiving, of the scriptures and the work with others for

justice-which brings the bridegroom and bride together? Does our God truly know us or are we stupid, foolish, unthinking and not really concerned about the feast of justice for all and peace on earth?

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