

Holy Tuesday

Remembrance of the Ten Maidens

Reading: Mathew 25: 1-13

Meditation

It was the blizzard of the century. More snow than anyone alive had ever seen. The weather forecasters had been predicting it for several days, but they weren't quite sure just when it would come or exactly how much snow would fall. When the blizzard finally did arrive, it hit with a vengeance. It snowed so fast that the plows could not keep up. You couldn't see at all because the driving wind and falling snow combined to make everything white. People were trapped in their homes; many houses lost electricity.

Some people had gotten the message. They had the foresight to make sure that their homes were well stocked with food, candles, flashlights and logs for the fireplace. But others, even though they had heard the same weather forecasts, did not prepare for the storm. They ended up hungry in a cold and dark house. Some of them even ended up on the TV news because they tried to drive, despite the storm, and became stranded in the snow and ice.

Jesus gives us the same lesson in the parable of the ten young women who were going to meet the bridegroom. Five had the foresight to take extra oil with their lamps, but five did not. The bridegroom was delayed and finally arrived in the middle of the night, while the women slept. When they awoke, the five who had oil lit their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. But the other five had to scramble at the last minute to go and find more oil to buy. When these five foolish young women finally returned, the five wise ones were already with the bridegroom and the door was shut. It was too late

Some of us are wise. We prepare ahead of time for what may be coming. Others of us are foolish. We don't prepare, thinking that there will always be time later. But there may not be time. It could be the blizzard of the century, it could be a marriage feast, or it could be the kingdom of God. We know

it's coming, but we're not sure when. We need to be ready now. The next hour or the next minute may be too late.

Prayer

*Lord, what you have told us about your kingdom is wonderful!
We hope to join you there someday.
But when it will come, only you can tell.
Help us to prepare for your coming and for your kingdom of tomorrow
By living out its truths today*

For reflection:

Am I living now as a citizen of the kingdom of God?
How?

What impact does my faith in the second coming have on my life?

Did you know...

In the Armenian Church at Jerusalem, ten candlesticks are placed on the bema, five lit and five unlit, during Holy Tuesday vesper service. In some parts of the Armenian world, ten girls proceed to the cancel with ten candles, five lit, five unlit, during the same service.