

Thirty -Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Nov. 15, 020.

*There is a story about a life Insurance Agent trying to sell a policy to an elderly gentleman. He said, "I really don't want to put any pressure on you or scare you so just take the policy home, sleep on it and call me in the morning, **if you wake up!** He attempted to put the "**Fear of the Lord**" in the poor fellow!*

Fear of the Lord is a thread that runs through all the readings today.

In the Book of Proverbs, we just heard, it tells us that "The woman who fears the Lord is to be praised;"

The Gospel seems to contradict that. It says, "The man who fears his Master was called a "wicked, lazy servant!" and was cast into darkness.

Our second reading from Thessalonians has Paul warning us that just when we think everything is safe and secure, disaster will strike. He warns us that the Lord will come like a thief in the night, so don't fall asleep on the job - "stay sober & alert!"

Our Psalm Response says, "Blessed are those who fear the Lord, and walk in his ways."

The Scriptures are actually speaking of two different types of fear. The fear of the man in the Gospel is a fear that locks us up and paralyzes us. The fear of the Lord that is praise worthy is one of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is a fear of not wanting to hurt or displease someone we love. It is an attitude of profound reverence, of deep respect, of wonder at the Majesty, the Goodness, the Beauty, the Mercy and the unconditional love of our God.

We grow in the fear of the Lord as our Response states, "By walking in His Ways." We walk in the ways of Jesus when:

We live the two Great Commandments of loving God and one another - even those we don't like.

We, like Jesus, seek to please the Father in our every thought, word, and action.

When, like Him, we seek to serve rather than be served. Not so long-ago Pope Francis said, "**Don't bury your talents** - life is not given to us so that we can keep it jealously for ourselves, but is given to us so that we may **donate it!**"

One of the saddest experiences I have had was some years ago as I was leaving a Health care Facility. As I was passing through the lobby I said to an elderly gentleman in a wheelchair, "Have a Good Day. May God Bless you." His response stopped me in my tracks. He replied, "I wish I was dead!" When I asked him to tell me his story, he told me, "My only son and no one else ever visits me." No wonder Mother Teresa once told a group of American tourists, don't come to India to serve the poor. They are right in your own home, down the street, and down the hall in every health facility. Her message was simply that we are put on earth to donate our lives, we are to use our talents to brighten the lives of others wherever we are planted.

- Pope John Paul 11 said the same thing in all his writings;
- Pope Francis has repeatedly said, "**Just do it.**" That is, **become foot washers!**...