

# 19<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday

Homily: Fr. Shijo George

Pastor – Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Victoria, BC, Canada

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The Master of any household expects his servants to be alert, diligent, and faithful. The Master typically does three things: he gives or assigns duties; he inspects their work; and rewards accordingly. The Master yearns for his servants' attention and dedication to their responsibilities. Attentive awareness to the assigned duties is the key to success.

Let me use the analogy of driving a car, to reflect on the Gospel passage.

When we drive we see many warnings: road signs, signals like traffic lights, and the speed limit for each road. Signs for the speed limit indicate the necessary speed for a safe drive; lines demarcate the lanes to travel within, and lines also indicate when and where to stop; and so on. In some places, the sign board may read: “Driver Alert! Next Services 400 km, Check Fuel.” This warns us that the next opportunity to fill our fuel tank is some distance away, prompting us to know if we have enough fuel for the trip, and if the fuel that we have is enough to help us make it to the next service station. In the same way, to facilitate our life’s journey to our eternal home, Heaven, Jesus gives us signs, directions, fuel, and air; which are the graces and virtues to live according to the Gospel. Sometimes, when we take a wrong turn, Jesus is there with a warning sign board: “WRONG WAY, REPENT!” If we are aware that we are travelling the wrong way, let us have the courage to make a U-turn on our journey, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Occasionally, we may run out of fuel, or find we are running on ‘low fuel’. We will then need to fill ourselves with the ‘FUEL OF GRACE’ through our prayers, receiving the sacraments, and doing good deeds for our brothers and sisters. The faithful servant is like a good driver. A good driver always checks their car, pays attention to what is needed, and ensures that the car is well maintained. This keeps the vehicle safe, in good repair, and ensures it will run smoothly to the intended destination. On the other hand, an unfaithful servant fails to do what is supposed to be done, pays no attention to what is needed, is irresponsible, and is unfaithful to their duties and their Master.



The main ability and aptitude in order for the servant to remain alert and faithful is to possess self-awareness.

The Philosopher, Carl Jung, suggests that: “Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.” And so, in our spiritual life, there is a need to look into our hearts and our personal lives. Being self-aware helps us to know about ourselves, our lives, and assists us to take the necessary spiritual action if we stray from God and the responsibilities we have in our lives. Looking inward helps to make us vigilant and faithful servants. Carl Jung further suggests that: “Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart.”

The Second Reading from the Book of Hebrews traces the faith of our ancestors, from Abraham on, that received favour from God as faithful servants of Yahweh. The common traits documented from their lives were self-awareness, that is, acknowledging that Yahweh was the author of their life; possessing a true vision of life through their faith; and having deep faith and trust in God. Abraham and the patriarchs did not indulge in or sought external visions, but rather they led their lives according to the inner vision from God. Faith is an inward focus. Likewise, Jesus expects us to live by this vision of life, strengthened by faithfulness, self-awareness, and being mindfully alert in life.

And so as Jesus advised, let us “be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”