

21<sup>st</sup> Thursday I 2005

[1 Thes 3:7-13](#)

We have been reassured about you, brothers and sisters, in our every distress and affliction, through your faith. For we now live, if you stand firm in the Lord.

What thanksgiving, then, can we render to God for you, for all the joy we feel on your account before our God? Night and day we pray beyond measure to see you in person and to remedy the deficiencies of your faith. Now may God himself, our Father, and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we have for you, so as to strengthen your hearts, to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones. Amen.

[Mt 24:42-51](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Stay awake!

For you do not know on which day your Lord will come. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.

"Who, then, is the faithful and prudent servant, whom the master has put in charge of his household to distribute to them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on his arrival finds doing so.

Amen, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property.

But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is long delayed,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards, the servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish him severely

and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth."

Both of these readings today talk about leaders and community.

Paul renders thanks to God for the joy he feels on account for his people. Paul is sustained not just by his personal faith, but by the people's faith.

In Matthew's Gospel, there is the call to be awake and ready. The master calls upon the household, his immediate community, to be prepared. Again, another leader and his community story.

A leader accomplishes nothing without the community that sustains the leader. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> parable the leader is to respond with service, to distribute what the household or community is in need of.

So what does this say to us? We sometimes find ourselves in the role of leader and sometimes as members of the group. When we lead we are called to act in the role of servant. Our community role is to be of mutual support.

This is how the scripture guides us, but we can also see that's how we are designed. Just as a single canine would perish without the pack, we are not expected to accomplish God's mission individually without each other.

How does this fall apart in my life? Sometimes in the façade of altruism, I am willing to give. But if I insist that it is my place to give, do I exclude others from sharing in the action, supporting the action, or maybe even their returning and sharing the gift?

Do I refuse to ask for help? Do it my way? All of that is counter to God's plan and design for us. If I give and do not ask for

support, for partners, than I run the risk of trying to take over God's mission by myself.

When you serve, can you ask and receive gift from your brother and sister? God put us here together, for each other, for Him