Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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August 26, 2021
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“Behold the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!” (Matt 25:5).

1 Thes 4:1-8; Matt 25:1-13

Someone once defined an artist as someone who dreams wide awake. True artists are so conscious of life and alert to its simultaneous possibilities, they never fully sleep. They see the depth, beauty and unity of everything as continuous, ever-present. Van Gogh was hypersensitive to color and form and captured ordinary things with such vividness. Poets Rainier Maria Rilke and Gerard Manley Hopkins conveyed insight and emotion with delicate power.

When we think of Jesus as a master storyteller, we are also seeing his artistry at projecting onto the imagination the longing for God in the human heart. One of his frequent images was that of a wedding. God calls us to share in the ultimate love story. We are invited to enter an intimate covenant with the very Source of our being. God waits like a bridegroom to receive the bride in a joyous communal celebration of love.

The search for love requires wisdom, also depicted in the Hebrew Scriptures as an exquisite, beautiful woman who pitches her tent in the desert and prepares a banquet of the finest foods and wines. “Turn in here,” she says to seekers of wisdom, "and find friendship with God."

The parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids focuses on the need for oil in their lamps, for the bridegroom is delayed and the night is long. This refers to the theme of waiting for the return of the risen Christ to his church. Without this oil -- the

anointing that is our relationship with God -- we will lack the wisdom to see in the dark as sleep overtakes us.

The wise bridesmaids are artists who are awake and conscious, who see the dream all the time. Their hearts have lived the love story, and so they are alert to the coming of the bridegroom and ready to enter the wedding.

St. Paul said that we should pray always, meaning that we should always be conscious of the presence of God and make of our lives a conversation with the one who created us with love and for love. Keep oil in your heart and reserve a part of you that never sleeps, for we know not the day nor the hour love will call our name.

Reprinted from 2018

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