



**Five Important Spiritual Thoughts from the Liturgy of the Word  
...and follow up for the Secular Franciscan  
November 24 – November 30**

**1 -- "By your perseverance you will secure your lives."**

(Lk 21:19)\*\*

...By our patient endurance of living well, we will deserve eternal life.  
How consistent am I in my spiritual life?

**2 – "Be vigilant at all times." (Lk 21:36)\*\***

...Extended meditation:

What would people do if they discovered the exact time when the earth as we know it would be destroyed? Would people simply be resigned to their fate, and prepare by not preparing, simply letting it happen, and dying when the time came? Or would they turn to their belief, a Supreme Being, allowing the divine to help them prepare themselves to accept the inevitable?

It is not a happy thought to think of our deaths. In fact, sometimes thinking about death can be downright frightening. We do not relish final moments in a hospital fighting the pain of whatever is killing us; nor do we want the feeling of disease that eats us up into earthly death; nor do we like to think about the possibility of a sudden accident. But no matter what we want, we know that we must die. Earthly death is not optional.

Jesus knew the feeling of the possibility of death. As with everything that has a deep effect on human beings, Jesus spoke about it. And when he spoke about death, it was always with a certain degree of hope rather than fear. He tells us to think of an eternal life with God by being prepared for our deaths. In fact, that moment is so full of hope that our God will "wait" on us, presumably giving us the very thing that we want which is nothing less than eternal life with our God. The image that Jesus uses in the story is an unbelievably consoling one: our God loves us so much that at the moment of our deaths, he will be there to take care of us personally.

The condition that Jesus gives is that we be "prepared for our deaths." What exactly is the meaning of the condition? The answer is given to us constantly in the Scriptures. Jesus tells us, in effect, that if we live the Christian life, that is, if we honestly strive to make the Christian virtues our own, then we will understand what being "prepared" means. If we live the

SHAPING THE FRANCISCAN FOOTPRINT  
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virtues of love, forgiveness, peace and the other characteristics that Jesus showed us, we will be ready no matter when the Lord comes.

There is an obvious urgency to Jesus's message because we do not know the hour of our earthly passing. But we are blessed to know what we must do to be prepared for that moment when it does come.

**3 -- "Amen, I say to you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith."**  
(Mt 8:10)\*\*

...Am I recognized in my community to have great faith?

**4 – "You have revealed [the wise and learned things] to the childlike."** (Lk 10:21)\*\*

...Am I developing the traits of a "child" in my life: humility, honesty, acceptance of God?

**5 -- "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."**  
(Mt 4:19)\*\*

...Have I truly come to the Lord in a Franciscan way?