

FATHER MARK SCHULTE
HOMILY
NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)
August 10, 2025

“Accountability”

My Brothers and Sisters, today’s Gospel speaks about the importance of being ready or prepared for when Jesus returns, often referred to as His second coming. “Be like men waiting their master’s return from a wedding” Be like the “head of a house”, who defends his home against a thief”. “Be on guard” (Lk 12:32-48).

Jesus speaks these words to the crowds who have gathered around Him. But Peter wants Jesus to be more specific. Does Jesus intend the parable for “us” – meaning the Apostles, or “is it for everyone”? Now Jesus addresses Peter and the other Apostles directly with a question as if to say, “This is for you, Peter”. And this is the translation of Luke verse 42 in your missalette: “Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of His servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time”?

I looked at several other biblical translations of that same verse and each one was a little different. So, which is correct? I asked A.I. (artificial intelligence) to “translate into English literally from the Greek language Luke Chapter twelve verse forty-two, which it did to the best of its ability along with various qualifications of the text.

- I then asked A.I. if the Greek word for food, food being a general term, could also mean wheat or grain. A.I. said yes. It could mean wheat, grain, or corn.
- I then asked A.I. if the words servants or household could be translated as “family”. A.I. said yes. It could mean family plus servants, employees or slaves living at the home.
- I then asked A.I. if the word for steward could be translated as the head of the family. A.I. said that it is sometimes translated as the head of the family, but it primarily means “household manager”. Head of the family would scripturally speaking be the father of the family.

My point is that the words of a verse can be translated in other ways, which could potentially give the verse a different or more clarified meaning. Here is the translation of verse 42 from the Douay Rheims Bible, the bible that the Catholic Church used from the time of St. Jerome in the fourth century up until about one hundred years ago. “And the Lord said: Who (thinkest thou) is the faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord setteth over His family to give them their measure of wheat in due season”.

- The word for Master now becomes “Lord”.
- The word servants now becomes “family”.
- The word food now becomes “wheat”, and wheat is made into bread.

Thus the alternate translation could now read: “Who is that faithful and wise father whom the Lord set over his family to give them their measure of wheat bread in due season”.

Now once again who is Jesus specifically addressing? He is talking to Peter and the other Apostles. Why is this relevant? It is because Peter and the Apostles will become the first Priests of the Church that Jesus has established. They will be tasked with providing food to the members, the children of the family, the household, the Church of God.

Jesus is in essence saying to Peter and the Apostles, “You are these stewards that I have put in charge of my household, my family. As stewards and as fathers, I will hold you accountable for giving my children their ration of wheat, the bread of life, the Holy Eucharist, my Body, and Blood, without which they will spiritually die. You are tasked with keeping my children spiritually alive. You have been given a grave responsibility, and I better find you doing so when I return”.

Here Jesus is essentially using the metaphor of a family, where the father of the family is held responsible by God for the physical and spiritual welfare of his family members, and all others who may be officially associated with his household.

Yes, the message of preparedness for the return of Jesus was meant for all people in general, but it is specifically addressed to the priest, the father of the Church, and also to the father of his family. All men are called to be fathers in some fashion therefore all men are directly implicated in Jesus’ question to Peter and the Apostles.

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be”. Fathers of the Church and fathers of families must be very careful not to allow themselves to get sucked into the frivolous attractions of the world. When Jesus returns these fathers will be held more accountable than anyone else because “To whom much is given much is expected”. The priest has been given custody of God’s greatest treasure, Jesus is the Holy Eucharist, the Bread of Life. The father in his family has been given by God the priceless treasure of his family. The priest must turn away from the world and back to the Eucharist. Fathers of families and men in general need to turn away from the world and back to their families, where they are the priest in their home.

My fear is that priests and fathers in general have forgotten this. We must pray that they return to their true divine calling before the Lord returns and it is too late, because they allowed themselves to be unprepared.

And finally, scriptural translations can impact greatly how a person interprets the text. Some modern biblical translations have been known to water down the text, meant not to reveal the deeper meaning of the text, but rather to appeal to the broader public sentiment, most of whom are in reality nonbelievers.

NOTE: CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church