

Matthew 25: 14-30 (shortened version)

Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man on his way abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to a third one; each in proportion to his ability.

Then he set out...

Now a long time after, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. "Sir," he said "you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness."

We all love getting a nicely wrapped gift whether it is for our birthday or at Christmas. We open and unwrap the gift that has been kindly given to us. We thank the person who gave us the gift and we use it. Think how the person who gave us the gift would feel if we didn't open it; instead we simply put it away and left it unopened. This is the situation that we are presented in today's Gospel. We have each been given gifts for which we will be called to account. The greatest of our gifts is our own vocation, our calling in life, and we are called to live this faithfully: parents, teachers, nurses, bus drivers, shopkeepers to name but a few. We may be afraid of failing in our duties; afraid of the responsibility our vocations require, but we cannot allow fear to prevent us from achieving fulfilment in our vocation. Pope John 23rd said, "we were not put on earth to guard a museum, but to cultivate a flourishing garden of life."

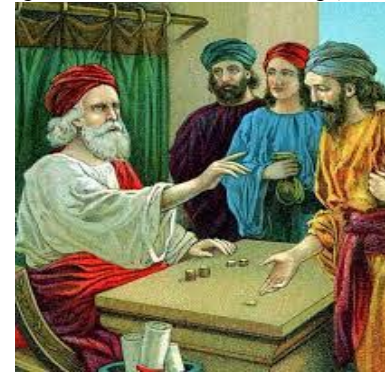
- How am I enabling my Garden of Life, my calling, to deepen, flourish and grow?

Prayer after Communion

We have partaken of the gifts of this sacred mystery, humbly imploring, O Lord, that what your Son commanded us to do in memory of him may bring us growth in charity.

This Sunday's Readings:
33rd SUNDAY YEAR A
15th November 2020

Keeping Watch While Working for the Lord



During these last weeks of the Church's Year, the readings focus on the second coming of Jesus at the end of time. Because some Christians got overly focused on when Jesus would come, Paul reminds the Thessalonians and us that our task is not to figure out when Jesus would come again but to live in such a way that we would be ready when He does come. The wife in the Book of Wisdom is a portrait of responsible readiness. She uses the talents God gave her to meet the responsibilities of her state in life and respond to the needs of the poor, the marginalised and the powerless. Like the wise woman, two of the servants in Jesus' parable use the talents God gives them to advance the Kingdom of God. One servant was concerned only to cover himself and preserve what he has. He opts for security, fearing to lose what has been entrusted to him.

Opening Prayer

Grant us, we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you, for it is full and lasting happiness to serve with constancy the author of all that is good.

Proverbs 31: 10-13. 19-20. 30-31

A perfect wife – who can find her? She is far beyond the price of pearls. Her husband's heart has confidence in her, from her he will derive no little profit. Advantage and not hurt she brings him all the days of her life. She is always busy with wool and with flax, she does her work with eager hands. She sets her hand to the distaff, her fingers grasp the spindle. She holds out her hand to the poor, she opens her arms to the needy. Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty; the woman who is wise is the one to praise. Give her a share in what her hands have worked for, and let her works tell her praises at the city gates.

The kind of wisdom the Scriptures visualise in the first reading today is a way of life that is born of walking humbly with God. A way of life that is inspired by the presence of God's Spirit. When I live in such a way and when I am consciously aware of God's presence, it creates an inner strength; but it is always a strength that manifests itself in gentleness, in humility, in self-sacrifice, and in kindness.

In living my life today do I responded to the needs others, especially those of the poor, the marginalised and the powerless? How?



Psalm 127

O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways! By the labour of your hands you shall eat. You will be happy and prosper.

*Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive, around your table.*

Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion in a happy Jerusalem all the days of your life.

Thessalonians 5: 1-6

You will not be expecting us to write anything to you about 'times and seasons', since you know very well that the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. It is when people are saying, 'How quiet and peaceful it is' that the worst suddenly happens, as suddenly as labour pains come on a pregnant woman; and there will be no way for anyone to evade it. But it is not as if you live in the dark, my brothers and sisters, for that Day to overtake you like a thief. No, you are all children of the light and children of the day: we do not belong to the night or to darkness, so we should not go on sleeping, as everyone else does, but stay wide awake and sober.

In the second reading Paul distinguishes between children of darkness and children of light. Children of light can look forward to the rapture with hope. Children of darkness must look forward hopelessly to the day of the Lord. Paul identifies himself and the Thessalonian Christians as "children of light, children of the day." He affirms that they are "not of the night or of the darkness." The Thessalonian Christians were once in the dark about spiritual matters, but the Holy Spirit shone the light of the gospel into their hearts and they believed in Jesus, the Light of the world.

Do my family, friends and neighbours see me as a child of light, a child of day through my life and attitudes?

Alleluia, Alleluia!

*Even if you have to die, says the Lord, keep faithful,
and I will give you the crown of life.*

Alleluia!

(Gospel & Reflection overleaf)

Prayer over the Offerings

Grant, O Lord, we pray, that what we offer in the sight of your majesty may obtain for us the grace of being devoted to you and gain us the prize of everlasting happiness