

## Homily - Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time November 15, 2020

As we draw closer to the end of the 2020 liturgical calendar, Year A. Next week, we will celebrate the solemnity of the Christ the King and the end of our liturgical year. The readings these days remind us of the end of time and our attention turns to our vigilance and preparation for the return of Christ in glory.

In Saint Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, he talks about being ready for the end of the world. We remembered last Sunday's readings were speaking about being ready! For us in our lives today, we try to live the best life we can so that our hearts are ready to receive Jesus.

In Matthew's Gospel present us a familiar and powerful parable of the talents of the three servants and how they dealt with the talents given to them. Perhaps it is just a coincidence that our word "talent," which means a gift of skill, is used in this story to refer to a very large amount of money. Talking about gifts and skills, our first reading from the book of Proverb introduces us to a woman of extraordinary skills, who uses her gifts both at home and out in the world, where she reaches out her hands to the poor.

In the parable of talents, Jesus tells us about a wealthy landowner who was preparing for a long journey. Before he left for his long journey, and he called his three servants together and put each of them in charge of something. He divided his money between them to care for while he was away. He entrusted money to them, not equally, but to each according to his ability and expected them to administer these. The first two servants received five and two talents from their master and they immediately invested the money & they doubled their money. They knew what to do with these talents that the master entrusted them with. These two servants could give back more than they were given when their master returned from his long journey. Their master praised and put them in charge of greater responsibilities after their good job. The third servant, however, didn't know how to invest his talents. He was afraid of losing the money & he buried it in the ground to protect it; so he was able to give back to the master exactly what he had been entrusted with. And for that, his master was not happy and punished him.

In this parable, Jesus is telling us that God is the man going on a journey who has entrusted each of us with certain talents, assets, skills, and gifts. God simply did not give us all the same talents because we do not have the same abilities. There are some of us who can handle five or two talents. Some others can handle only one. There are some of us who have great intellectual capabilities, and some who do not. Some have the ability to project and articulate their thoughts, and there are some who cannot. There are some of us who have talents of music, sport, and some who do not. There are some have gifts of teaching, speaking, singing, dancing, and there some who cannot. Yes we received unequal talents but we received the same reward, the joy of belonging to God's Kingdom. Here Jesus tells us that it does not really matter what and how many talents we receive. What counts is how we use these talents, how we fully develop our talents and make the best use of them.

When we listen to the parable of talents, we can more easily visualize how God expects us to use the talents we have been given, not just to enrich ourselves or our families, but to make the world a better place. Perhaps, we have received certain talents that God gave us, but many of us somehow do not know what to do with them and we just keep them hidden in the closets of our minds and bodies. We are like the lazy servant who was afraid to invest and make good use of his talents. God gave us talents and he did not want us to hide them or keep them to ourselves. God wants us to develop and share them so that we can do good things. Even though many of us may receive little skills or gifts, we should not be afraid of

using what little talents we have to serve God and others in need. It does not matter how big or small talents we have, we try our best to share what talents we have received. The more we share our gifts and talents, the more we develop them. Of course we will receive back some good rewards for ourselves.

Let us learn to discover our gifts and skills that God has endowed us with. We discover and use our gifts in a right way by developing them further. We make our gifts by trying our best to use them for the good of God, the good for ourselves and to make the world a better place.

In other words, we not only use our gifts for our own interest, but we also use these talents and abilities according to God's will, for His glory, and in the service of our neighbors.

Brothers and Sisters,

We continue our prayer together today. As we draw nearer to the end of the church year, this may be a good time for us to look back ourselves and evaluate our gifts. Also this may be a good time for us to reflect on the talents that we have been given and how we have used them in the service of God's reign. Just as the master praised the faithful savants and gave them greater responsibilities for their great job. It would be wonderful when Jesus came back and he could say to each of us, "*Well done, my good and faithful servant*" (Mt 25: 21). Also it would be a blessing when we can come with Him to attend the holy banquet at the Lord's Table and share in his Joy. Amen.