

(World Day for the Poor)

We find today an invitation from the gospel to put all our talents at the service of God and of his kingdom.



Another parable about the generosity of God. Even the one talent was a huge amount of money to give – the equivalent of twenty years' wages. God gives a lot to everyone – life, grace, love. We do our best to share what he has given. He raises the people who invested their money well and made more.

Our man who kept the talent hidden was a fearful man – afraid of his master. Many people have some sort of fear of God. He gives much and expects more, they feel. They fear that he will punish them with poverty or bad luck or misery in many ways for not living a good life. God does not punish. For our sins, often it is life which punishes us. What we do for good or evil comes back on us. God believes in each of us – so much that this huge talent is given to us. God's belief in us gives us the energy to do the best with what we are given.

The gift of love is for sharing; gifts of personality, prosperity; all not to be hidden but to be given in a return of love. The language is exaggerated, and even the end is figurative. The meaning is to do the best we can with what we are given in life. God will see in each of us the good and faithful servant we are or try to be. Then there is an offer of more of his gift of love and forgiveness.

Lord may we do the best we can with what you have given us.

Donal Neary SJ, Editor Sacred Heart Messenger



your children like shoots of the olive, around your table. [R]

3. 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. [R]

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-6

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians.

You will not be expecting us to write anything to you, brothers, 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 anybody to evade it.

But it is not as if you live in the dark, my brothers, for that Day to overtake you like a thief. No, you are all sons of light and sons 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.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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

GOSPEL Matthew 25: 14 - 30 (Shorter form in italics)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

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. The man who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The man who had received two made two more in the same way. But the man who had received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 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."

Next the man with the two talents came forward. "Sir," he said "you entrusted me with two talents; here are two 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." Last came forward the man who had the one talent. "Sir," said he "I had heard you were a hard man, reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered; so I was afraid, and I went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here it is; it was yours, you have it back." But his master answered him, "You

wicked and lazy servant! So you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered? Well then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have recovered my capital with interest. So now, take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the five talents. For to everyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from the man who has not, even what he has will be taken away. As for this good-for-nothing servant, throw him out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

All bow for following two lines:

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

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. Through Christ our Lord.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The Lord said: I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction. You will call upon me, and I will answer you, and I will lead back your captives from every place.

THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father you take away the sins of the world:

have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father have mercy on us;

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen



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. Through our Lord Jesus Christ...

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING Proverbs 31: 10-13, 19-20, 30-31.

A reading from the Book of Proverbs.

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 hands 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 word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps. 127: 1 - 5

R. O blessed are those who fear the Lord.

1. 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. [R]

2. Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house;