

November 19, 2017

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Lord's plans for us are peace and not disaster!

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

Psalms 128:1-5

1 Thess. 5:1-6

Matthew 25:14-30

The poetic reading from Proverbs concerns a worthy wife and emphasizes a person who uses her talents well. Unlike the servant who buries his talents, the worthy wife puts all her abilities to good use, and in addition fears the Lord, a known step towards obtaining Wisdom.

The psalmist describes the blessings that naturally flow from a man who walks in the ways of the Lord. Such a man will not go hungry for he will eat the fruits of his handiwork. His wife will be like a fruitful vine in his home, his children like olive plants around his table.

Paul realizes the Thessalonians have concerns and even fears about the Second Coming. They are asking questions about times and seasons, just as the disciples did. Paul reminds them that this is a needless concern because it should be clear that no one knows the time and instead they should always be ready because the end will come like a thief in the night, without warning.

Jesus tells his listeners the parable of servants. All were given silver pieces to invest but the one who hid his money was afraid of his master, afraid that when held accountable he would be found lacking because the master was a tough taskmaster. What was given to him was taken away and given to the most productive.



The Father invests talents in us,
The Son guides us to where they are needed.
The Holy Spirit opens up creative ways to use them.

Today's Gospel speaks of the end times. Jesus teaches his disciples and us that while we wait for the Second Coming, we should not, out of fear of failure or fear of accountability, neglect to use our talents. The word talent refers to a valuable silver piece, and is the source word for our English word talent. Considering the context of the parable we may note that talents are not earned by hard work but are placed in our keeping so that we may use them for the good of the community. Don't bury them away, but use them so they will develop.

"The reading from the Holy Gospel advises us to bear in mind that we who have received something more than others in this world may be judged more severely by the world's creator. When his gifts increase the responsibility of accounting for them is also greater. Many people in the church resemble the fearful servant. They are afraid to attempt a better way of life, but not of resting in idleness." (Saint Gregory the Great, 7th century)

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