

**33rd Sun in Ordinary time November 19th day of
November 2017**

We have today another sobering parable from the Lord about judgment and accountability. As we come to the end of the Church year, our Gospel readings and parables are about meeting the Lord with the story of how we have lived and loved on this earth.

This week's Gospel parable is about the "talents" and what three individuals did with them. Next week the Gospel is about the separation of the sheep from the goats.

The emphasis in all these three parables is we live in a responsible and faithful manner right now because there is an accounting each of us will have to give personally to the Lord at the end of our time here. What did we do with our talents .

In Today's parable three individuals are given a different number of talents. Two of them increased what they had. One did nothing with it and was condemned. This parable acknowledges we are born equally

talented entrusted with different talents, in today's first reading.

We often look at people around us we feel "are very talented" and compare ourselves to them. While minimizing the very real and worthwhile gifts we have from God. Because we can't sing a solo like some people therefore we shouldn't sing at all. Because we can't be a professional athlete like some people, therefore why join any team? Instead of using the talents we have, are we always dreaming about the one's we don't have?

Our talent may not be spectacular but it is real and important. There are talents like those of the virtuous wife in the book of Proverbs today who has the skill of raising a family together, caring for a spouse ,managing a home . To raise a family and keep the family together is a talent desperately needed today. The problem really comes in when the husband at times acts like a child.

The gospel parable goes further .The question posed by the parable is this: Are we

using our talents and resources in the service of God and his church? The man in the Gospel who was given the least was not a bad man. He didn't steal the money, he didn't squander it. His only crime was he buried the money in the ground and did nothing with it for the Master.

Two things that keep us from using our talents are fear and sloth. We talk, we plan, we make resolutions but our plans never get traction. We can live in a spiritual tomorrow that never quite becomes today.

The lesson of the parable is clear. All three individuals in the parable receive talents. For two of them those talents became a blessing. For one, it became a judgment. The first two were servants were rewarded for their faithfulness, courage and activity. third servant was judged for his unfaithfulness cowardice and inactivity. Who is this third servant. Some interpreters say he stands for the Scribes and Pharisees whose emphasis was on preservation rather than spiritual transformation. Our tradition has

seen the third servant as potentially each one of us.

Reflect on your gift; maybe it is the gift of friendship, for organization, for leadership , for spiritual strength, for empathy, for loyalty , for bridge-building, for helping, for teaching, for giving advice for consolation, for deep prayer. It may be the gift of money, or possessions that could bring blessings to others. Whatever the talents the resources we have been given are we using them in the service of the Lord?

The talents we have are gifts. When we use them in the service of the Lord , they become blessings. AMEN