

BURIED TALENTS

(MATTHEW 25:14-30)



Jesus continues his teaching on the coming of the kingdom of God with the parable of the landowner and the servants to whom he gives a portion of his resources and the judgement which ensues when he returns.

This is not a story urging self-improvement, but is another warning about the return of the Son of Man. This is indicated by the change in the way the main character is described. At the beginning, he is referred to simply as "a man": but the third servant buries "his master's" money. The term "master" is *Kyrios* in Matthew's original Greek text and can also be understood as "Lord", and is used for the rest of the narrative. Thus we can see that there is more to the message than meets the eye. The fate of the third servant is to be cast out of the household without a reference. He may be free of his tyrannical employer, but the chances of his finding another position at all, far less one at the level he previously enjoyed, are practically nil, hence the parable ends with a note about frustration, with "weeping and gnashing of teeth".

It is worth noting that the master does not dispute the third servant's description of him. However, once his sharp practices are set out in public, the usual social conventions have been breached and punishment is sure to follow. We should, therefore, be careful about allegorising, that is, seeing corresponding details in every aspect of the parable. ■

REFLECT

There are several possible themes running through this parable, most of which do not concern us today. The word "talent" refers, originally, to a considerable sum of money, but passed into English with the sense of innate ability, thanks to this story. The third servant may well be in the same position as someone who discovers that she or he is working for a boss or a firm whose working practices are fundamentally dishonest. We noticed that the central figure in the parable does not disagree with his servant's assessment of himself as

"a hard man", reaping and gathering from what was not his own. Did he commend the other two stewards, who doubled their amounts, for pursuing similar policies and exploiting other people? In that case, depositing the money in the bank would be the best way of avoiding such behaviour, but the third individual does not want to co-operate in any way at all. If so, then he is perhaps not to be condemned as lazy or irresponsible, but rather commended for acting in an honourable way, according to his conscience.

LEARN

The word "talent" originally referred to a large sum of money.

It passed into English usage as meaning a special aptitude or gift, due to the influence of this parable.

"Throw him out into the dark" refers to condemnation at the last judgement.

DO

When you hear on the news or in conversation about a whistle-blower, remember the person in your prayers.

SAY

Do not put me to that kind of test.

We know that there are people who are caught in such a dilemma today. To take a stand as a whistle-blower takes a tremendous amount of courage, especially for a person who has family responsibilities. The "sensible" advice would be to remain silent, to keep one's head down: but sometimes the situation cries out for justice and for the help of the Holy Spirit for the person concerned. ■

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.

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.

COLLECT

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, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

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.

PSALM

Psalm 127

Response:

O blessed are those who fear the Lord.

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

- 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 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 the 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

(For shorter form, read between > <)

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 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 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 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.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

To be near God is my happiness,
to place my hope in God the Lord.

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.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Our Lady & St Edmund of Abingdon ***1 Radley Rd, Abingdon on Thames, Oxon, OX14 3PL***

We are a **LiveSimply** parish aiming to live Simply, Sustainably and in Solidarity with the Poor

Parish Priest: Fr. Jamie McGrath Tel: 01235 520375
Parish Secretary: Lisa Paterson Tel: 01235 520375
Office Hours: 10.30am-12.30pm Tuesday to Friday
Office Email: abingdon@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

We live stream all services

Safeguarding Team: Tel. 07572 935 230
Visits at JR Hospital: Fr Pius 01865 221732
Visits and Help: Society of Vincent de Paul Group, contact via Parish Office
Parish Website: www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk
Primary School: St. Edmund's School, Radley Road, Abingdon, OX14 3PP Tel 521558



Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth Reg. Charity No 246871

www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

PARISH OFFICE OPENING HOURS:

Please note that during this second period of lockdown, and until further notice, the Parish Office opening hours will be from **Tuesdays to Fridays from 10.30am to 12.30pm**. Outside of these times, Fr Jamie will respond to urgent phone messages as soon as he can.

MASSES:

Sadly, until further notice, physical attendance at Mass is not possible. You can follow all Masses on our live stream. See our website for the link.

PRIVATE PRAYER

We are blessed that the church can be open, but for **private prayer only**, on the following days and times:

- ✠ **Tuesdays: 12pm to 1pm**
- ✠ **Thursdays: 7.30am to 8.30am**
- ✠ **Fridays: 12pm to 1pm.**

ST EDMUND OF ABINGDON:

The solemnity of St Edmund of Abingdon is on Monday 16th November. Join us for Mass at 9am on our live stream to pray for his intercession for our parish and diocese.

DAY OF PRAYER TO END THE COVID CRISIS

Bishop Philip invites us to keep with him a special Day of Prayer and Fasting for an End to the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Day is called "*Twenty-Four Hours with the Lord*" and will take place on **Friday 27th November** This is the last Friday of the Church's Liturgical Year before we enter the new Year with the First Sunday of Advent on 29th November – please save the date. There will be a twenty-four hour long programme of Mass, prayer, Rosary and Eucharistic Adoration at Portsmouth Cathedral, including an all-night vigil, of which you we are invited to join in as much as you can by live stream. You can see the proposed programme on our website news page. ***In our parish, you are invited to join in praying the Rosary at 8pm on Zoom. Email, well in advance, contact@ourladyandstedmund.org.uk to get the joining in details.***

33rd week of Ordinary Time

Live streamed ONLY

Sunday 15 November

10.15am Mass (Mary Louise Field, RIP)
2.00pm Polish Mass

Monday 16 November *St Edmund of Abingdon*

9am Mass (Sir George Bowyer, RIP)

Tuesday 17 November

NO Mass See: www.ourladyandstedmund.org.uk/english-martyrs-vale-of-white-horse for other masses

Wednesday 18 November

7pm Mass (Joan Turner & Elizabeth Silvester
93rd Birthday Intentions)

Thursday 19 November

9.30am Mass (Joe, Gertie & other deceased
members of Price Family, RIP)

Friday 20 November

7pm Mass (William Seery, RIP)

Saturday 21 November *The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

12pm Mass (Special intention)



SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot today receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to

CHURCH DONATIONS

The parish still **really** needs your donations. You can make these on our website. This will enable those who normally use the weekly gift aid white envelope system or loose plate donations to continue to support the Parish. *You can also place donations in the basket as you leave church.* **Your continued support for the Parish is greatly appreciated.**

Please do not use the online 'Donate' button for clergy stipends (Mass intentions, weddings, Baptisms). These can be put in an envelope marked FAO the parish priest and indicating what the offering is for and who is giving it. The envelope can then be left at the parish office or in the donations basket in the Church.



MARY'S MEALS - DOUBLE THE LOVE!

As a parish we had to cancel our **Mary's Meals** "Rags to Riches" fundraiser in May due to Covid 19. However, Sue Richards is now trying to run 250 miles, in small chunks, in a challenge called "Run for their Lives". She has nearly made it! Now she needs your help to continue the sponsorship to feed children, one meal a day, in their place of education, in some of the poorest places on earth. Just think, **£15.90 feeds one child for 1 year!** **DOUBLE THE LOVE** will enable every donation you make between now and the end of November to be doubled! Sue hopes to finish the challenge by the middle of November.

Please consider contributing to this worthy cause. You can donate via the link on our website news page, or by a cheque made out to *Mary's Meals*, (or by cash), in an envelope through Sue's door at 25 Picklers Hill; Abingdon; Oxfordshire OX14 2BB. Sue is also happy to come and collect a donation if you are housebound. Just call her on 07598 315375 or 01235 530623. **Together we can make a difference!** Thank you all in advance and God Bless.



NATIONAL YOUTH SUNDAY

National Youth Sunday 2020 (NYS) takes place on **Sunday 22nd November**, the feast of Christ the King. It represents an opportunity to explicitly recognise young people - their gifts, talents and uniqueness. It also provides the Church with an opportunity to thank them for and affirm their contribution to the life of the local and universal Church.

The Catholic Youth Ministry Federation (CYMFed) has produced a host of resources to help facilitate the celebration of National Youth Sunday in school, parish and at home. Please visit www.nationalyouthsunday.com to have a look.

Parish Events for the Week

NO EVENTS IN THE PARISH CENTRE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Future Diary Dates

No events at the moment.



CAROL ON YOUR DOORSTEP

The Churches in Abingdon, supported by Abingdon Town Council, are calling on us to celebrate Christmas together – socially distanced – by joining in with our community and singing the carol *Silent Night* from our own doorstep on **Thursday 17 December at 8 pm**. Please consider putting this date and time in your diaries and we will provide you with the words for the carol nearer the time.



2020 ADVENT RETREAT BY ZOOM

The Gospel for Advent calls us to be vigilant, to stay awake, to prepare! To help you prepare your own personal journey for Advent this year we invite you to join the 2020 Advent Retreat by Zoom, which will take place on **Saturday 28th November from 10.30am to 2.30pm**, with Holy Mass at 12pm.

The retreat will include reflections and discussions, scripture, sacred art video, guided prayer and an opportunity to share in the journey of the magi to the birth of Christ. The retreat is open to all and everyone is welcome. People can choose whether to join in various discussions and sharing or can simply listen and reflect.

The day will be hosted by the parish RCIA team and anyone interested should contact Pauline on pehanley@hotmail.com or call 07506 753085 to register for the zoom link.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Sadly, we cannot host a lunch this year. However, Peachcroft Christian Centre are offering to deliver festive hampers (edible and non-edible items) on Christmas day to those who would otherwise be alone or are in need of help. If you would like this help – or know anyone that would – please can you let them know **as soon as possible** by either emailing: events@peachcroftcc.org or phoning 07379 469311.

WE PRAY FOR

During November we pray for all the deceased members of our parish, our family and our friends.