

As we come to the end of another liturgical year, **OUR READINGS SEEM SOLEMN AND SOBER, CHALLENGING US** to reflect on our own lives and to consider our own legacy: what we will leave behind or what others will say about us. Will they say that we used our God-given talents well?? Today's readings help us with this challenge.

The Gospel tells of three investors, the two who risked and gained and the one who, stricken by fear, made sure he did not lose the little he had. Our initial reaction might be to side with the prudent guy and why not? In today's world where the market can be so unpredictable, it makes sense to be cautious, especially when dealing with another's money.

If we equate the word *talent* with a huge amount of money, we run the risk of misunderstanding this parable. Instead, we should see it as referring to something of tremendous value — the Gospel message. Because St. Matthew has chosen to place this parable ahead of the Last Judgment, we know that it speaks to us of success, failure and judgment. Some scholars suggest the parable is really an accusation against the Pharisees for their spiritual timidity. They knew the promise of the Good News, and yet chose to bury it in a tomb of rules and regulations. On the other hand, Jesus exhorts his disciples to take risks — to invest their whole lives in the truth of the Gospel and, if necessary, to risk all for the glory of God.

Jesus then turns the story upside down. The irony is that each is given *according to his ability* and that when risked, the reward is a share in the master's joy. If we see the parable as an exhortation to work diligently and fearlessly for the return of Christ, then, are we as Christians willing to use and, if necessary, to risk all our gifts, talents and faith to share Christ with others and to bear the fruit of the dividends of that investment?

Fr. Michael

In all things,
give thanks
thanks
1 Thessalonians 5:18



Mientras llegamos al final de otro año liturgico, **LECTURAS PARECEN SOLEMNES Y NUESTRAS SOBRIAS**, nos llaman a reflexionar en nuestra vida y considerar nuestro legado: que es lo que dejamos atrás o que es lo que diran sobre nosotros. ¿Diran ellos que los talentos que Dios nos dio los usamos bien? Las lecturas de hoy nos ayudan con estos retos.

El Evangelio habla de los tres inversionistas, dos quienes arriesgaron y ganaron, y el que falla por miedo, asegurandose de no perder lo poco que tenia. Nuestra reaccion inicial podria ser, estar del lado del hombre prudente y ¿porque no? En el mundo de hoy, donde la mercadotecnia puede ser impredecible, hace logica ser precabido, especialmente cuando se trata del dinero de otros.

Si evaluamos la palabra *talento* con un gran numero de dinero, corremos el riesgo de mal entender esta parabola. En lugar de eso, deberiamos verlo referido a algo de tremendo valor – el mensaje del Evangelio. Porque San Mateo ha elegido poner esta parabola antes del Ultimo Juicio, sabemos que nos habla de exitos, fallas y juicio. Algunos estudiosos sugieren que la parabola es realmente una acusacion en contra de los fariseos por su timidez espiritual. Ellos sabian de la promesa de la Buena Nueva, y aun asi decidieron enterrarla en una tumba de reglas y regulaciones. Por otra parte, Jesus exorta a sus discipulos a tomar el riesgo – invertir su vida entera en la verdad del Evangelio y, si es necesario, arriesgar todo para la gloria de Dios.

Jesus da la vuelta a la historia. La ironia es que, a cada uno se le ha dado *de acuerdo a sus habilidades* y su riesgo, el premio es compartir de la alegria del maestro. Si nosotros vemos la parabola como una exortacion a trabajar diligentemente y sin temor para el regreso de Cristo, entonces, ¿Cómo cristianos estamos dispuestos a usar, y si es necesario, arriesgar todos nuestros dones, talentos y fe para compartir a Cristo con otros y llevar el fruto del dividendo de lo se invierte?

Padre Miguel



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13. **MUSICAL HOLLY JOLLY SANTA:** J. Heagus
14. **BACK PACK:** Lee Hanson
15. **LIGHTED NATIVITY PICTURE:** Jan Prink



FAITH SERIES: CATECHISM THROUGH THE YEAR

FROM THE REALMS OF ANGELS ...

The Book of Judges repeatedly speaks of angels being sent by God to his people (Jgs 2:1-5). Are we to understand these and similar biblical accounts as references to real supernatural beings, or simply as accounts of vision?

Both Scripture and Tradition repeatedly affirm that God has, in fact, created non-human, angelic beings, to be his agents, warriors, and messengers. They are personal and immortal ... they have a rational intellect and a free will ... they are pure spirit, without bodies like ours ... they surpass in perfection all visible creatures, as is evident from their splendor (Ps 103:20-21). Nevertheless, redeemed human beings will one day be perfected in such a way that the angels will be subject to them (1 Cor 6:3).

Angels have been present since creation, and have played critical roles in salvation history — from the fall of man to the present. In various ways they have carried out the divine plan for the ancient descendants of Abraham. When God became man in Jesus Christ, they surrounded and served him throughout his earthly life, from his conception through the moment of his ascension into heaven. They will also announce his return to earth at the end of time, and will serve him as he judges the earth.

Meanwhile, angels are “ministering spirits sent to serve, for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation” (Heb 1:14). They join the Church in her worship and ministry; they serve us as guardians, intercessors, and guides. With the saints in heaven they behold the face of God and enjoy the eternal life of the Blessed Trinity.

Finally, Scripture speaks of various angelic hierarchies, and provides the names of three particular angels: Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael. (...also see: “Do the Devil and Demons Really Exist?”, 1-2)

RECOMMENDED READING: Excerpt taken from The NEW Catholic Answer Bible

Gn 3:24 · Ex 3:2; 23:20 · Jgs 6:11-12,20-22; 13:3-22 · 2 Kgs 1:15 · Tb 12:12-15 · Jb 38:4-7 · Ps 18:11; 78:49; 91:11; 148:2 ·
Is 6:2 · Dn 9:21; 10:5-9,13 · Mt 2:13,19-20; 4:11; 13:37-42; 18:10; 25:31 · Lk 1:26-38; 2:9-15; 20:36; 22:43; 24:4-7 ·
Acts 1:10-11 · Col 1:16 · Rv 4:6-8; 5:11-14; 8:2-3; 12:7

& Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) Nos. 148 · 311 · 326-336 · 350-352 · 391-393 · 414 · 525 · 538 · 559 ·

760 · 1023-1029 · 1053 · 1161 · 1352 · 2676