

33rd Ordinary Sunday
November 15, 2020
“Using God’s Gifts”

Pro 31:10...31
1 Thes 5:1-6
Mt 25:14-30

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

Most of us have known, or at least heard about, someone who has been privileged but who made poor use of or even squandered what they were given. We have heard of children born into wealth who lived spoiled lives until they died. We also know of people who did not make good use of the gifts and talents it was evident they had! And the great tragedy is that these same people often failed at being the kind of human being they were meant to be, as well!

On the other hand, we also know of people who were deprived, who had very little, who used the little they had extremely well! Moreover, as often as not, these who did so well, with so little, usually were great human beings!

All the scripture readings for today teach us just how important it is to use well all that God has given to us, if we expect to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Book of Proverbs tells us what was expected of a woman in Biblical times. It paints a picture of the ideal wife and mother 500 years before the time of Jesus. She was someone who managed the household very well – She used her abilities to provide a true home for her husband and children – Moreover, she was generous toward the poor and to those in need!

Unfortunately, our modern world has all but wiped out the traditional role of women as described in Proverbs. Now, most wives and mothers are forced to work. They help to sustain the family by working outside the home, for the most part. Many are even divorced and single parents and are forced to “get by” any way they can! Fortunate are those women who are blessed with a career that seems to be what God has asked of them!

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus teaches us how important it is to use well everything God has given to us. The parable also tells us that the proof that we can take on greater responsibilities is the way we developed what we were given in the first place.

However, to fail with what God has given to us, is to have failed in our essential vocation as a human being! Moreover, we absolutely must not let fear disable us from doing what we should and must do. We can't just give back, unused and undeveloped, the gifts that God entrusted to us. To do so, is to fail and to be unworthy of the Kingdom of God and the eternal life to which we have been called!

Furthermore, part of the suffering and pain of eternal damnation is the regret, remorse, and self-loathing that comes when we know what we have wasted – what we threw away – and what could have been ours, if we did what we should have done!

Whenever the world is in crisis, there is talk and speculation about when the End Times will come. Catholic Christians reflect upon this every year at this time when our yearly cycle of scripture readings comes to an end.

Today, in the New Testament reading, St. Paul urges us not to worry about when the End Times will come. Only God knows this! However, our own death can come at any time. In fact, it will come like a “thief in the night”!

Nevertheless, if we walk in the light of Jesus Christ – If we are attuned to the voice of the Holy Spirit – If we live as true disciples – If we use well all that God has given to us – If we are attentive to all that God asks of us at every moment and in every situation – Then we have nothing to fear! For we will be alert and ready. We will not be caught off-guard, indolent, or unprepared. We will meet Jesus with excitement and with expectant, open arms. And Jesus will bless us because we will have been good and faithful servants!

So, let us pray that each of us experiences this welcome at the moment when our Divine Master comes for us!

Amen.

November 15, 2020

Msgr. Russell G. Terra