



FAITH CIRCLES

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP CATECHESIS

33RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • YEAR A

SUNDAY GOSPEL

Sharing our Gifts

MATTHEW 25:14-30

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 the 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 the 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 the 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." ■

Parable of the Talents by Andrey Mironov

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS



The Gospel this Sunday is the Parable of the Talents. The meaning of this is clear. The man in the parable represents Jesus, we are the servants, and the talents are the inheritance that the Lord entrusts

to us. What is the inheritance? His Word, the Eucharist, faith in the Heavenly Father, his forgiveness..., in other words, so many things, his most precious treasures. This is the inheritance that He entrusts to us, not only to safeguard, but to make fruitful! While in common usage the term "talent" indicates a pronounced individual quality, for example talent

in music, in sport, and so on, in the parable, talent represent the riches of the Lord, which He entrusts to us so that we make them bear fruit.

The hole dug into the soil by the "wicked and slothful servant" points to the fear of risk which blocks creativity and the fruitfulness of love, because

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the fear of the risks of love stop us. Jesus does not ask us to store his grace in a safe!

Jesus does not ask us for this, but he wants us to use it to benefit others. All the goods that we have received are to give to others, and thus they increase, as if He were to tell us: "Here is my mercy, my tenderness, my forgiveness: take them and make ample use of them". And what have we done with them? Whom have we "infected" with our faith? How many people have we encouraged with our hope? How much love have we shared with our neighbour? These are questions that will do us good to ask ourselves. Any environment, even the furthest and

most impractical, can become a place where our talents can bear fruit. There are no situations or places precluded from the Christian presence and witness. The witness which Jesus asks of us is not closed, but is open, it is in our hands.

This parable urges us not to conceal our faith and our belonging to Christ, not to bury the Word of the Gospel, but to let it circulate in our life, in our relationships, in concrete situations, as a strength which galvanises, which purifies, which renews. Similarly, the forgiveness, which the Lord grants us particularly in the Sacrament of Reconciliation: let us not keep it closed within ourselves, but let us allow it to emit its power, which brings down the walls that our egoism has raised,

which enables us to take the first step in strained relationships, to resume the dialogue where there is no longer communication. Allow these talents, these gifts, these presents that the Lord has given us, to be, to grow, to bear fruit for others, with our witness.

Moreover, the Lord does not give the same things to everyone in the same way: He knows us personally and entrusts us with what is right for us; but in everyone, in all, there is something equal: the same, immense trust. God trusts us, God has hope in us! And this is the same for everyone. Let us not disappoint Him! Let us not be misled by fear, but let us reciprocate trust with trust! ■

TALKING POINTS

1. Pope Francis shows us that talents, more than just our own individual skills and abilities, are the treasures of our loving God – faith, mercy, love, Sacraments and our Church herself. It can be hard to share these talents. Why do you think that is?
2. We are called to reciprocate God's trust in us with trust in him. What little steps could we take, in sharing our talents, to help this trust grow?

PRAYER POINTS

Pray for Each Other: Ask about and pray for the needs of the group members. Individuals might pray for themselves or ask someone else to pray for them.

Response: *Lord, you always give us more than enough*

Reflect: The love, mercy, grace and kindness of God is a treasure that all people need. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal one person to you in your life that He is calling you to extend these treasures to this week.

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, all good things come from you. Please give us your heart of generosity in the sharing of the treasures you have given us. May we go beyond ourselves, to the margins and beyond, and share of your goodness wherever we go. Amen.