



AMDG  
33RD SUNDAY  
IN ORDINARY TIME  
YEAR A  
15TH NOVEMBER 2020



**‘Well done, good and faithful servant!’**

OPENING PRAYER

Grant us we pray, O Lord our God,  
the constant gladness of being devoted to you,  
for it is full of lasting happiness to serve with constancy  
the author of all that is good.

This Sunday marks both the last week of Ordinary Time and the penultimate Sunday of the liturgical year, as we prepare for the Feast of Christ, King of the Universe, next Sunday. Today’s readings, like those of last week, continue to remind us that we need to be prepared for the end of time, an event which the authors of the New Testament thought was imminent.

The *First Reading* from Proverbs suggests that we should embody all the qualities of ‘the perfect wife’ as seen through the eyes of the author. She is industrious and diligent, not just for her family but also for the poor and the needy.

The *Psalms* also extols the virtues of family life and blesses those who fear – or are in awe of – the Lord.

In the *Second Reading*, St Paul tells us that the Day of the Lord will come when we least expect it, ‘like a thief in the night’. We should remain wide awake in anticipation of the Lord’s coming.

In the *Gospel*, the parable of the talents reminds us to use the gifts and talents we have for the benefit of others. Everyone has been given at least one talent, and it is our duty to use it in the service of society.

This week, I might spend some time reflecting on how best I can use the talents I have been entrusted with, so that when the time comes, I can also be called a ‘good and faithful servant’.

## FIRST READING PROVERBS 31: 10–13, 19–20, 30–31

**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 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.

As I come to spend some time with the Lord, what frame of mind am I in?  
What am I hoping will happen today? ... What do I desire?  
I spend a few moments speaking to the Lord and listening to him in my heart.  
Then I pick up the leaflet.

I slowly read this passage, aware that it reflects the practices and culture of  
ancient times.

Can it possibly have anything to say to me, a man or woman living in this century?  
I pause and ponder.

I may not be a wife or a husband myself, yet what do the actions and feelings of  
these people tell me about their inner disposition?

Does the way they relate to each other have anything to teach me about the way  
I behave towards the people around me?

Perhaps I try to translate the woman's actions into contemporary ones ...  
or I may like to switch gender and focus on what a husband might do to support  
and help his wife today.

How does it make me feel? I tell the Lord.

If the words of this passage seem to affect me personally (perhaps reopening old  
wounds or even echoing a situation I am living through just now), I open my heart  
to the Lord, trusting that he knows and understands my hurt and my needs.  
I listen to him.

When I am ready, I take my leave, thanking the Lord for the time spent together  
and for any insights he has given me.

## GOSPEL MATTHEW 25: 14–21 (abridged)

**J**esus 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 their ability. Then he set out.

‘The one who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The one who had received two made two more in the same way. But the servant who had received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money.

‘Now a long time after, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them. The one who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more, saying. “Sir, you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made.” The master replied, “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.”’

After coming to some inner quiet in the way that works best for me, I read the shortened version of this well known parable several times. I may want to read the full version in my missal or bible at a later time.

What strikes me as I read the text? Perhaps there’s a phrase I haven’t ‘heard’ before? I stay with it for a few moments.

I may want to consider my own ‘talents’. I notice that everyone has been given at least one talent. Can I name mine?

What have I done with my talents? ... What *do* I do with them? ...  
What *will* I do?

In what ways have others been affected as I use them?

I ponder, and tell the Lord how I feel.

I listen to the Lord calling me his good and faithful servant, giving me his trust, and inviting me to share in his happiness.

How do I want to respond? With gratitude, disbelief, yearning ...?

In time, I slowly conclude my prayer: *Glory be to the Father ...*

## Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

She holds out her hand to the poor,  
she opens her arms to the needy.

*First Reading*

Blessed are those who fear the Lord  
and walk in his ways!

*Psalm*

You are all children of light and children of the day.

*Second Reading*

Well done, good and faithful servant ... come and join in your  
master's happiness!

*Gospel*

*This week's texts if you want to explore further:*

*Prov. 31:10–13, 19–20, 30–31; Ps. 127 (128); 1Thes. 5: 1–6; Mt. 25: 14–30*



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IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

**JESUIT**  
Ministries



Prepared by St Beuno's Outreach in the Diocese of Wrexham

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