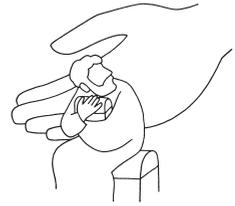


AMDG  
33RD SUNDAY IN  
ORDINARY TIME  
YEAR A  
19TH NOVEMBER 2017



**The Lord gives us talents  
and asks us to use them in his service**

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.

Amen.

Today's readings are for us – we who live in the 'in-between times' between the Lord's Resurrection and his Second Coming.

Convinced that the Last Day would occur within their own lifetime, the first Christians are counselled by St Paul (*Second Reading*) always to be prepared, since they cannot know the hour.

Similarly, St Matthew (*Gospel*) encourages those same early Christians, who wondered how best to live in the days before Jesus's return in glory. Both writers urge them simply to wait, confidently, in the light, while being faithful to their daily responsibilities.

Today's *Psalms* reminds us of the joys that come from such faithful service, while the author of the *First Reading*, using the analogy of a good wife, shows that the book of Proverbs is the best place to look for advice on using one's talents in a fruitful, practical way.

Let us pray, this week, for greater devotion to the Lord, and the awareness that, already, we have a share in the Master's happiness.

## SECOND READING: 1 THESSALONIANS 5: 1–6

**Y**ou will not be expecting us to write anything to you, brothers and sisters, about ‘times and seasons’, since you know very 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 and sisters, for that Day to overtake you like a thief. No, you are all children of light and children of the day: we do not belong to the night or to darkness, so we should not go on sleeping, as everyone else does, but stay wide awake and sober.

I begin in the usual way, trying to become still, asking for the help of the Spirit, noting how I am feeling.

I take my time.

When ready, I read the text slowly a few times.

I try to be as open as I can; I let the text touch me.

What is striking me as I read? To where am I drawn? I ponder.

Is something about light and darkness speaking to me?

Perhaps I have a sense of being in the dark about some problem or concern.

It can be hard not to be afraid at times.

I talk to the Lord ...

I may feel invited to recall times when I felt as though I was living in the light ... when I saw that all would be well.

What was it like? What is it like recalling it now?

Again I talk to the Lord ...

I think of the freedom that comes from being secure in the love of the Lord.

From where do my worries come ...? My sense of balance ...?

How do I feel now?

As I bring my prayer to a close, I ask for the grace to remain always in the light, and to feel the security of the Lord's love.

*Glory be ...*

## GOSPEL: MATTHEW 21: 33–43

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 ... “Well done, good and faithful servant ... 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? ... 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 they will have more than enough; but from those who have not, even what they have 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.””

I read the text prayerfully, asking the Lord to help me be open to this familiar, but challenging parable. I pause often as I read, noting how I am moved within.

To where, or to whom, do I feel drawn?

I may like to ponder the talents I have been given.

What is my greatest, most precious gift? I share this with the Lord.

Perhaps I can recall occasions when I have stored up such gifts for myself.

Was I acting from fear ... dread ... lack of initiative ... or ...?

How may the Lord be inviting me, even now, to make confident use of resources so freely given? I listen to the Lord and then respond ...

As I end my prayer, I may like to speak out my gratitude for the Lord’s wonderful gifts, and ask to know His deep peace.

*Our 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*

You will be happy and prosper.

*Responsorial Psalm*

Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty. *Gospel Acclamation*

Come and join in your master's happiness!

*Gospel*

Let us pray that God will help us to be faithful.

Father of all that is good, keep us faithful in serving you  
for to serve you is our lasting joy.

*Old Opening Prayer*

*This week's texts if you'd like to reflect further:*

*Proverbs 31:10–13, 19–20, 30–31; Psalm 127 (128);*

*1 Thessalonians 5: 1–6; Matthew 25:14–30*



How does this image  
speak to me in my  
prayer?



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH  
IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM

JESUIT  
Ministries



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

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