

Father Rudy's Reflections

The Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 19, 2023

Invest Your "Talents" for All to Share

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

For many reasons, some of us are afraid to take risks in life, and consequently, this feeling may roll over to our faith. According to psychologists, human beings' natural inclination is to be reluctant to take risks. Consequently, if we embrace risk aversion, we might be somewhat cut off from the world out of a fear of making a mistake or losing something dear or from a lack of self-confidence. We might hoard, run from new experiences, or remain, in a sense, paralyzed at dead center.

Today is the Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, the second to last Sunday in our liturgical year, and in Mathew's Gospel, Jesus shares the Parable of the Talents, a story that provides a timeless message for all ages. A "talent" in that era represented a significant amount, much like a substantial inheritance today. The master, in this story, entrusts his servants with talents, symbolizing the manifold gifts God grants each of us—talents, abilities, and resources. We are but stewards of these divine endowments.

The Parable of the Talents conveys a profound message to share our faith and the gifts we have received from the benevolence of our Father. We are called to be proactive, to grow the gifts we have been given, and to use them to bless others. Just as a lump of coal becomes a precious diamond under pressure, so do our talents and faith grow through use and sharing. Our faith, like a mustard seed, starts small but flourishes when sown. And although we might be afraid to share our gifts, we are called to do so. We are challenged to invest, take risks, and increase the abundance of God's grace within us. This process mirrors a dynamic bank account: the more we deposit, the greater the dividends we and others will reap.

This parable's essence is clear: all good things come from God, and by offering them to the world, we participate in the divine economy. Sharing our talents, love, and faith multiplies them, bringing spiritual riches. It's not about the quantity of our talents but the quality of our stewardship. God measures our faithfulness by our willingness to sow, not our estimation of the talent's size. Imagine an analogy in today's context. If you were given a vast wealth of knowledge, would you hoard it or share it with those eager to learn? The more you teach, the more you understand, and the more your gift grows. Likewise, faith is most powerful when it's not concealed but passed on, when it touches and transforms others.

I urge you to break free from the fear of inadequacy and embrace the divine trust placed in us. Invest your talents, no matter how small you think they are, for God is the multiplier of what we offer to the world. In the end, we are called to be faithful stewards, nurturing others with our faith, and letting our light shine, so that in the end, we may hear those beautiful words: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Yours in Christ,
Father Rudy