

Homily for Saturday August 31<sup>st</sup> 2019

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Week of Ordinary Time

Charlie Brown in the PEANUTS cartoon comes to the kitchen one morning in his PJ's and says to his mother, "Mom, I think I've discovered my difficulty in getting out of bed." "What's that?" "I'm allergic to mornings," says Charlie. Many are allergic to mornings. We orient our lives to the sunset and not the dawn. We live poor lives when we might be spiritually rich. We die before we really live.

The Parable of the Talents centers on three people but then zeroes in on a certain one-talent man who was allergic to mornings. He could have been rich, but he settled for much less. He surveyed his past experience and concluded that life could never be different. He sees God as a tyrant and believes he has been dealt a sub-par hand made up of only jokers. He did not know the good things that might have awaited him because he viewed his life as worthless and so did nothing with what he had been given. He chose to die before he really lived.

Through this parable, Jesus is speaking to each of us challenging us to venture out, to live life in courageous faith, to invest our lives for Him. In this parable Jesus is giving us a story inviting us to live life to the fullest living before we die. It is to make the most of everyday opportunities as we invest in the life God has entrusted to us.

Jesus loved to use examples drawn from the world of business. And he especially liked this dynamic of investment as a model of the spiritual life. The reason is clear. God exists in gift form. Therefore, if you want his life in you, you have to learn to give it away. Think of the talents as everything that we've received from God—life, breath, being, and powers. Because they come from God, they are meant to become gifts. If you cling to them, in the manner of the third servant, they don't grow; in fact, they wither away and the sense of worthlessness experienced now will have an eternal dividend:

***And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'***

How important is the way we invest in life today because of how it shapes our perception of God and ourselves. Paul helps us to apply this parable specifically in today's reading from Thessalonians. He calls us to a deepening love for one another in a very practical way:

***But we exhort you, brethren, to do so more and more, (that is to grow in love) 11 to aspire to live quietly, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we charged you.***

At the heart of the talents God has given to us is the capacity to grow in love. Jesus said as much at the Last Supper when he gave the disciples the commandment to love as he loved. St. Clement who was the fourth Pope wrote about love this way in his letter to the Corinthians:

*"No tongue can tell the heights to which love uplifts us. Love unites us to God; love casts a veil over innumerable sins; there are no limits to love's endurance, no end to its patience. There is*

*nothing base, nothing proud, about love. It was in love that all God's chosen ones were made perfect. Without love nothing is pleasing to God"*

With our investment in love increasing we can give ourselves to living quiet lives where each day we are choosing to do the tasks of that day diligently and conscientiously doing as well as we can the cares and responsibilities that make up our Sunday through Saturday lives.

When we live with this kind of intentionality we will look to the morning with anticipation as the sun rises on another day to make investments that will reward us today and in eternity.