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## ORIENTATION

The Sunday Liturgies for the month of November are concerned with “end” things. The first Sunday in November (Nov. 2) is the Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed (ALL SOULS DAY) and reminds us that there is more to this life and we are called to be holy (ALL SAINTS). November 9 (DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA in ROME) asks us examine our sources of “consolation” and “challenge.” The Gospel for 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time (Nov. 16) has us identify the “talents” God has given each of us and to reflect how well we are using these gifts to build the kingdom of God. The last Sunday of the Church’s Liturgical Year celebrates THE SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST on November 23, 2008. The themes asks us to take a good look at our lives and ask ourselves “*how am I living out my baptismal promises?*”

The Gospel reading for the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time challenges us to evaluate how each one of us is living the paschal mystery. In the story, one man received only one talent. He buried it so he could produce it when the Master returned. He was prudent, safe; but he took no risks. The others received more talents and in contrast took risks and increased their talents. When the master returned he praised the ones to RISKED spending, investing, sharing their talents and took back the talent he had given the “prudent” one.

*We can be Catholics in name only by doing what is necessary—go to Mass, get to confession, say our daily prayers—but take no risks. Real growth in becoming a follower of Jesus comes in taking risks. What risks are you willing to take?*

## GOSPEL

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

“A man going on a journey  
called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them.  
To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one—  
to each according to his ability.

Then he went away.

Immediately the one who received five talents went and traded with them,  
and made another five.

Likewise, the one who received two made another two.

But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground  
and buried his master’s money.

After a long time  
the master of those servants came back  
and settled accounts with them.  
The one who had received five talents came forward  
bringing the additional five.  
He said, 'Master, you gave me five talents.  
See, I have made five more.'  
His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant.  
Since you were faithful in small matters,  
I will give you great responsibilities.  
Come, share your master's joy.'  
Then the one who had received two talents also came forward and said,  
'Master, you gave me two talents.  
See, I have made two more.'  
His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant.  
Since you were faithful in small matters,  
I will give you great responsibilities.  
Come, share your master's joy.'  
Then the one who had received the one talent came forward and said,  
'Master, I knew you were a demanding person,  
harvesting where you did not plant  
and gathering where you did not scatter;  
so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground.  
Here it is back.'  
His master said to him in reply, 'You wicked, lazy servant!  
So you knew that I harvest where I did not plant  
and gather where I did not scatter?  
Should you not then have put my money in the bank  
so that I could have got it back with interest on my return?  
Now then! Take the talent from him and give it to the one with ten.  
For to everyone who has,  
more will be given and he will grow rich;  
but from the one who has not,  
even what he has will be taken away.  
And throw this useless servant into the darkness outside,  
where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.'" [MT 25:14-30](#)

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Are you a "saver" or a "spender"?
- Which of the three servants in this gospel do you identify the most?
- What is your opinion of the Master in the story?
- What areas of your life does this parable touch?
- How do you feel when you are given a lot of responsibility?
- How do you feel about the way you are "investing" your life?
- If the Master returned today, how much of your talents and potential would he say you are using for him right now?

## PRAYER

The term "talent" was first used for a unit of weight, then for a unit of coins. The present-day use of "talent" as an ability comes from this parable.

REPETITION 2: As you re-read the parable, think about what Jesus might say to you about

taking responsibility for your time, money and abilities.

REPETITION 3: As you re-read the parable this one last time, let your mind and heart wander to a word or phrase that stands out to you. How is it comforting or challenging you? Talk to Jesus about what the word or phrase is stirring up in you?

### ST. JULIE SAYS

“Our Lord does not ask us to do great things to obtain Heaven, but He promises it to those who are faithful in little things; to those who do not let pass the least occasion of mortifying self.” -- St. Julie Billiart, Foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

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*We have a few copies of **Sacred Space for Advent and the Christmas Season** ready to put in the mail to the first twenty women who send a current mailing address. Simply hit the **REPLY** button and put **SACRED SPACE** in the subject line and Put your **MAILING ADDRESS** in the body of the message. SIMPLE AS THAT.*

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Sr. Angele Lewis, SNDdeN  
National Vocation Team Office  
30 Jeffreys Neck Road  
Ipswich, MA 01938-1308  
978-380-1571  
[AngeleLewisSND@verizon.net](mailto:AngeleLewisSND@verizon.net)  
[Angele.Lewis@SNDdeN.org](mailto:Angele.Lewis@SNDdeN.org)