

Rectoría San Juan de Dios
XXXIII Sunday in Ordinary Time-Cycle A
Prv 31, 10-13.19-20.30; Ps 128; 1 Thes 5, 1-6; Mt 25, 14-30
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Let Us Take Part in the Joy of the Lord

In the next to last Sunday of the liturgical year, the Word of God leads us, by way of this parable of the talents, to meditate on our maturity as we face the final day; in it, Jesus teaches us about the appropriate way to use the gifts that we have received from God. But beyond this responsibility, the Gospel refers to *taking part in the joy of the Lord*. This was the reward for the first two servants for administering the landowner's estate properly, multiplying their talents.

We have chosen this idea because we all definitely long to be able to participate in the joy of the Lord. And this is important to think about today because while the world enjoys itself with ephemeral or relative pleasures, God proposes that we take part in His joy, an absolute joy that never ends and that permits us to discover the His true image, and not to be like the third servant who buried his talent because he thought that his master was a “hard” man.

What does this joy consist of? How can it be reached? Through the ways that only the Spirit of God knows, each of us will come to know the answer in our approach to His Word, but also we can put into action these three ideas that will help us:

1-Let us manage our estate.

There is no one so poor that he does not think of himself as a master who can produce riches to share with

others. With the image of the industrious woman in the first reading, we are directed to the sense of creativity and skill in a material and spiritual house.

It is not necessary that all be landowners or that we have a rich ancestry from which we can manage our estate. It is enough to discover the hidden riches in our own small world of our home or our relationships. We are rich from what we are producing in the daily struggles in our life, and especially in the maturity with which we love those closest to us and in the charity with which we help those in most need. As we heard in Proverbs, this industrious woman even helped the poor from what she produced.⁴⁸

We have to manage our estate, to exercise a joyful authority over our goods, filling our material spaces and the spaces of our relationships with life, experiencing that we are rich having parents, children, spouses, and friends; and beyond that, to have the management of an estate that leads us to see those in most need of material help and affection.

⁴⁸ A mission experience from my time as a seminarian comes to my mind. I was sent to work for some weeks in a parish in the Sierra and had been making my way there on foot for two hours, over hillside paths, until five o'clock in the afternoon. I then found myself in a deserted place; it was getting dark and I had not reached my destination. After I walked a little further along the road, I was offered shelter by a family that lived poorly on a hillside. These are images that are difficult to forget—the joy of the couple while showing me the riches they had that I considered poor. At dawn, they wanted to cut ears of corn for me from their garden, though they had only about twenty rows. I felt embarrassed to take many, but they felt like landowners, rich. I always remember with joy and emotion the expression on their faces when they gifted me with this phrase: *Cutting them did not use them up; they are in the garden, take more.* That is how I understand that each one can become a landowner, valuing what he has, whether a little or a lot, and have the brotherly desire to share his gifts.

2- Let us live in the light of day.

That is to say, let us be awake and attentive, but working, because that is the way to develop our talents. St Paul, in the second reading, gives us an interesting key to understanding: to live awake and soberly while we await the coming of the Lord, that is, the end of our life.

This means knowing that I have already gained enough, but not to waste it; to live frugally, in the sobriety of one who hopes that the master of everything will return for him. I am the owner of nothing, and while I live my life story in relationship with God and with others, I live in a sobriety that helps me not to satisfy myself with passing or relative joys, but to long for the true joy, the absolute joy of my Lord.

3-Let us dig up the talent.

If we think about it, it seems that we all have buried some talent. And most of the time, it will have been for *fear*, as with the third servant in the parable.

How many great women have remained buried in life, for fear of being oppressed, judged, or simply because of a mistaken way of understanding their participation in public life. How many buried talents and how many men have buried their talent for fear of being great, for fear of risk!

Memory can help us here again if we remember our infancy, adolescence, or youth, when the great ideals of our future were developing—where have we left so many dreams and our first skills, our talents?

We could find our talents that have been buried during all these years and give new meaning to the rest of our life; this is said today beautifully in the *Good News*: that

the Lord has not yet arrived to ask for His talent; that we have time to dig it up; that while we live, there is the possibility *to take part in the joy of our Lord*.

And not only is this necessary so that I may re-create myself in the new development of my talents; that is already, of itself, an important and a big step, but it is necessary because God wants us well-finished, perfect. He made us with sufficient talents to complete ourselves in His created perfection. This is the *Joy of the Lord*—that we reach the fullness of life for which we were created.

It is necessary to develop our talents because the more we develop them, the more we become perfect and more like God; this is His great joy: that we come to be *like Him*.