

33rd Sunday Ordinary Time Year A

November 15-16, 2014

Readings: Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31; 1 Thess 5:1-6; Matt 25:14-30

For some strange reason, I can still vividly recall when my mother brought me to the local bank in Highland Park to open up my very first Passbook Savings Account. I believe that it was when I was in second or third grade and the account opened with \$23.90. To me, that was a lot of money. Using a currency calculator, that was \$139.94, so you can appreciate my feeling of accomplishment! Perhaps my parents were trying to teach me early on the value of money, the value of hard work and the benefits of saving and seeing the account grow over time.

In those days, our savings book consisted of hand written entries by the teller. If I came back and added something, it would be reflected in the next line, so there was the advantage of visually seeing the amount grow over time. Psychologically, that was very helpful. In today's Gospel, we hear the familiar parable of the talents. The spiritual point of course is fairly straight forward- what do you do with the talents that you have been given? It concerns how we take our gifts and put them at the service of others, and as importantly, help those talents to grow.

Do people today really have the ability to see that when they act in service to others, their own spiritual life grows? I think the answer has to be a resounding "Yes." We instinctively see this to be the case- when we live our lives with others in mind, we are happier, more fulfilled and most certainly less selfish. The problem comes in our modern society in which we are so busy, so scheduled and quite frankly, overwhelmed, we do not think that we can possibly take the time to do so.

This past Friday evening I was privileged to attend a Pro-Life Dinner sponsored by the Highland and University Life Care Centers whose work I have supported for years- and yet two things came to mind. First, I should be doing more than I am doing. I simply realized that I am not doing enough. Secondly, after a long week, on a cold Friday night I was tired and found myself feeling the fatigue around 8:30 p.m.! All good things, to be sure- but reality sets in.

How can we give more when we can't get done that which is already on our plate? We must trust that God will give us the grace, that He will enliven us and strengthen us to make the right choices. Perhaps it is time to let go of some things, some activities, in order to make room for others, ones that truly make use of our gifts.

I urge each of you to prayerfully consider how you may be more involved in the life of the Church, in the life of this parish, or your home parish, as the case may be. Even if you belong to another parish and come here as a regular visitor, there are volunteer opportunities here that will occupy only a small amount of time, such as our twice yearly Church cleanings, for example.

Giving back to the Church has the effect of magnifying, bringing to light the spiritual growth that you will begin to see, slowly, but surely. Almost imperceptible as it may be, growth happens, our spiritual portfolio develops, diversifies and transforms us. It is wonderful to see it happen.

Please prayerfully consider your involvement here at the Cathedral, for we value your presence, your commitment and your prayers on behalf of our parish.