



33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ***YEAR A – November 19, 2017***

The first Reading today (Psalms 31:10-03, 19-20, 30-31) speaks to us about the “value” of a worthy wife. Her “value” is not measured in dollars and cents. Her “value” is priceless. Read the passage again and notice the closing line, “...let her works praise her at the city gates.” She fulfilled the task given to her by God and earned God’s reward.

Paul’s letter (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6) reminds us that we must stay awake and alert, unlike those who are “asleep”. We too have a function to fulfill – a purpose given to us by God and like the worthy wife in the first reading; we must fulfill that task if we want God’s reward.

In the Gospel (Matthew 25:14-30) Jesus tells a story about people who received different talents from their master along with a mandate to use them or lose them. Some did, one did not. You know the outcome.

We all have a mission from God, including His own Son. No one fulfilled it better than Jesus, God asks us now to live our Lord’s way and accept his son as our Lord and Savior. We are not called to die for our faith, but we are called to live it. We are challenged to “*find*” the kingdom of God.

There is a story about an old man who lived in a very big mansion. He had a son - his only son and he was the pride and joy of the old man's life. The mansion was filled with all kinds of expensive things, including paintings by some of the great masters costing millions of dollars. As time unfolded, the son went to war and his father missed him very much. One day, the sad news came that his son was killed saving the life of another soldier and the old man was never the same.

Weeks later, a young man appeared at the door of the mansion and presented the master of the house with an unusual gift. It was the soldier whose life was saved by his son. He painted a picture of the old man's son and presented it to the father of the man who saved his life. The painting was not a work of art and certainly nothing like the paintings that were worth millions of dollars. But the old man was so moved that he hung it in the most prominent place in the house for all to see.

Sometime later, the old man died. It was his will that all his belongings be auctioned off. So in due course, the auction began. The first things on the block were the paintings and the very first one was the painting of his son. The people began to grumble. They had come for the expensive stuff and they would not be denied. No one made a bid on the picture of the son. "Put the picture away and let's get on with the bidding", someone shouted from the crowd, but the auctioneer was unmoved. Finally, that young soldier came into the room and bid ten dollars for the picture he had painted. The auctioneer said, “Do I hear 15”, but there was no response, only more grumbling. Loudly he announced, “Going once, going twice, sold to the man in the last row.”

Then he took out a piece of paper that looked very official and announced, "It is the will of the master of the house that his entire fortune should go to the person who buys the picture of his son." His words are these, "Whoever accepts my son, will have my entire fortune.”

God is like that with his son. Whoever accepts his son inherits his entire kingdom, including the kingdom of heaven. We accept Jesus by living his way of life here on earth. When we do that, we fulfill *our* purpose like the “worthy wife” fulfilled hers. Don’t be like the people who St. Paul says are “asleep”. They look for the kingdom of God in the wrong places. It can’t be found there. It is not a place. It is a state of being. It is within you!

