

## **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, November 19, 2017**

### ***The Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time***

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on one or more of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom

#### **CREATED EQUAL?**

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." Those words are from the Declaration of Independence authorized by the Continental Congress July 4, 1776. That document declared that the thirteen colonies were ending their allegiance to the Kingdom of Great Britain.

Those revered and often quoted words, "all men are created equal," are both true and false.

All men and women are creations of God endowed by God with certain rights that cannot be taken away. No one person has greater rights than another. All persons are equal.

Yet all people are not created equal by God. If they were then we would all be best-selling authors, superstar athletes, award-winning musicians, successful entrepreneurs, admired artists, sculptors and actors. We are not equal when it comes to our talents, skills, creativity, and physical and mental abilities. That fact is borne out in this Sunday's Gospel (Matthew 25:14-30).

In that Gospel, Jesus tells a parable about a master who is about to go on a journey. He calls in his three servants and entrusts his possessions to them. The first receives five talents (five units of gold or silver). The second receives two talents, and the third one talent.

We are told the amount they received was based on their abilities. If the master had discerned they were all equal in their skills, he would have given each of them the same amount of money.

When the time comes for these servants to give an account of what they did with the wealth entrusted to them, the first and second servants each report they doubled what they received.

But the third servant simply returns the single talent he was given. He did not use the skills the master saw in him to increase the one talent he received.

While the "talents" given those servants refers to units of money, over time the term has taken on the meaning it has today, namely, abilities or skills.

Seen in that light, the parable goes from one about investing money to one about working for the growth of the kingdom of God.

In the parable, the master entrusts his wealth to his servants, then goes away. Just so Jesus, our master, has entrusted his wealth – his kingdom – to us and he expects us to use the talents we have been given to build up that kingdom in our world.

God has not given all people an equal number of “talents,” an equal number of skills and abilities. While that may not seem fair, we know it to be true. Perhaps God endows us with talents according to how God perceives we might make use of them.

Though we are not all equally blessed with abilities and skills, the Lord has the same expectation of us all. The Lord expects us to use whatever talents he has given us to further the growth of his kingdom on earth.

Those who do so, will hear the Lord say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.... Come, share your master's joy.”

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