

God's Word for this Week

This week's readings are from The Passion Translation



The Collect of the Second Sunday before Advent

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed
to destroy the works of the devil
and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life:
Grant that we, having this hope,
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;
that when he shall appear in power and great glory,
we may be made like him
in his eternal and glorious kingdom;
where he is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

The Old Testament Reading.

Judges 4: 1-7

4 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, now that Ehud was dead. 2 So the Lord sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan. Sisera, the commander of his army had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and because he had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the Lord for help. 4 Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. 5 She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided. 6 She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, “The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. 7 I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.’”

The Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5: 11-13

¹¹Because of this, encourage the hearts of your fellow believers and support one another, just as you have already been doing. ¹²Dear brothers and sisters, make sure that you show your deep appreciation for those who cherish you and diligently work as ministers among you. For they are your leaders who care for you, teach you, and stand before the Lord on your behalf. ¹³They value you with great love. Because of their service to you, let peace reign among yourselves.



The Gospel Reading

Matthew 25: 14-30

¹⁴‘For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents,* to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one

who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, “Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.” ²¹His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.” ²³His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” ²⁶But his master replied, “You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”





This week's Gospel gives us plenty to think about. At first glance we may find it hard to understand how the first seemingly diligent servant was to be taken to task for burying the master's treasure, one would presume to protect it! However, on closer inspection it becomes clear that the Master expected his servants to actually do something with what he had given them; to use their initiative and, from that, to build upon the treasure that was already in their trusted hands.

What are the God-given talents that lie in your hands?

Have you been reluctant to let them be seen and hidden them away due to shyness or embarrassment?

Sometimes it can happen that a lack of self-esteem may prohibit a person from stepping out and shining the light or talent they have been given. Pray that God equips you with the best possible way to put the gift he has given you to good use.

Isn't it often the case that what we understand to be God's will for us is entirely different to where God is actually calling us or what God is guiding us to do?!

Reflect on a moment in your life where you were unexpectedly surprised at God's bigger picture for you and give thanks to the One who knows all things!

Psalm 123

- 1 To you I lift up my eyes,
to you that are enthroned in the heavens.
- 2 As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master,
or the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
- 3 So our eyes wait upon the Lord our God,
until he have mercy upon us.
- 4 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.
- 5 Our soul has had more than enough of the scorn of the arrogant,
and of the contempt of the proud.