

OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA, WEYMOUTH
HOMILY FOR THE 33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)
16th NOVEMBER 2014

As the year draws to a close our readings remind us that our life on earth also draws to a close, and just as we can look forward to another spring and summer after winter, so the faithful believer can look forward to new life after death, but in between there is winter.

The winter of the soul is the time of transition from this life to the next.

This is the point at which, being freed from our human limitations, we see God as God really is, and seeing God as he really is inevitably means judgement.

The thought of judgement worries many people so let's see what we can learn about it from our reading today, another parable

The story concerns a wealthy business man, so imagine Lord Sugar.

He gives talents to his three apprentices.

Originally a talent was a large sum of money.

He expects them to use it to make more money.

Then he goes away and leaves them to use their own initiative.

The two with most invest the money and double it.

The one with the least hides it.

Lord Sugar returns and calls the three apprentices account for their dealings.

The two who doubled their money are hired; the one who made nothing is fired. They have been judged.

So, what is Jesus trying to tell us about judgement?

There are three things that he is not telling us:

1. That God is not Lord Sugar and Lord Sugar is not God.
2. We do not have to be successful business people. Jesus is not justifying our capitalist economy.
3. Whereas we usually understand a talent as an outstanding ability, Jesus meant anything that enables us to fulfil our potential for good.

So what is Jesus trying to tell us about judgement?

1. That he gives different abilities to different people, to some more to others less, and he will judge us only for the abilities that he has given.

Jesus said that those who have received more will be judged more severely, so it follows that those who have received less will be judged less severely.

We are not individually responsible for the salvation of the world unless God has given us personally the talents with which to save the world.

He will not hold us responsible for talents that we do not have.

2. We must focus on our own talents and make the most of them.

We must not envy other people for their talents, nor feel inferior if we have different talents.

God has given us our own talents for a good purpose.

He expects us to make the most of our own talents and not to worry about anyone else's.

3. The only person in the parable who was not rewarded was the one who hid his talent because he was afraid to use it.

Some people think they have no talent.

This is a mistake; we all have the talent to love.

It may be hard, but at Mass we can develop that talent by exposing ourselves to the love of God in his Word and the Blessed Sacrament of the altar.

If we allow God to love us we will be able to love others; Jesus expects it.

If we let his love grow in us and extend it to others we will be judged as good and faithful servants.

Rev Geoffrey Carey