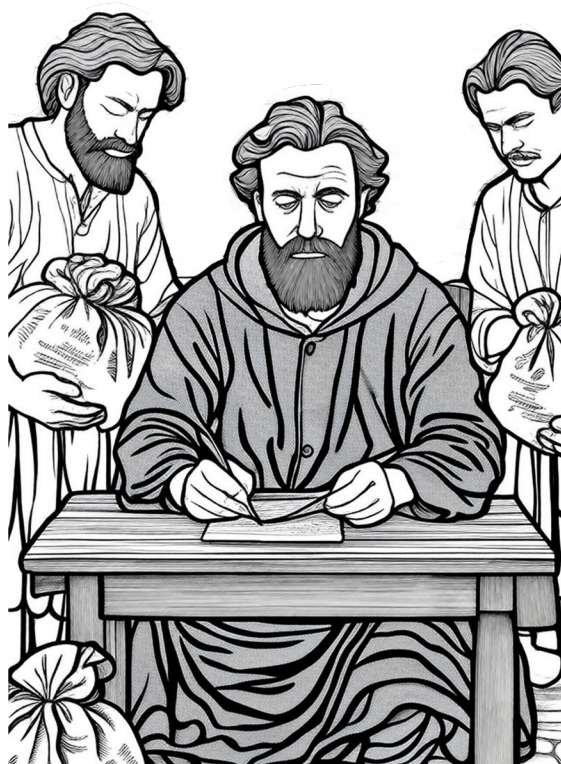


Be Enterprising and Resourceful!

THE GOSPEL PARABLE seems to jump out direct from social media and newspapers' headlines. Every day we have stories of directors, managers, contractors, and agents accused of corruption, of mismanaging, appropriating, or squandering the people's money entrusted to them. Accounts of falsified documents, forgery or counterfeiting, misuse of funds, ghost projects, etc.—it seems that Jesus speaks of our time rather than his own. We wonder if human nature has changed for the better, if there is something truly new under the sun.

The deeds of the steward in the Gospel are rather commonplace; what is surprising and disturbing is the commendation that he receives. We expect to hear Jesus vigorously denounce the swindling, but he gives none. Jesus purposely sets the scene to draw from the story an important but unexpected lesson: "Do you see the resourcefulness of the children of this world? They secure their future without delay. Would that you were as capable as they are in securing your future with God!"

Let us focus on the steward. Is he guilty of the imputation that he squandered his master's property? Most probably he is. But he does not waste time trying to justify himself. Neither does he suffer the illusion that he can



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find employment elsewhere. He immediately faces his immediate concern: how to secure his future. Will he dig ditches? Never! Will he turn beggar? What a horrible disgrace that will be for him!

He comes out with an acceptable solution and pursues it. He approaches his master's debtors one by one. He tears up their bills and gives them new ones—but for a much smaller amount. In so doing, he has the debtors think they are recipients of a particular favor from him. He also controls a form of blackmail on them in case they complain because they have agreed with his arrangement.

The steward loses his commission in changing and lowering the accounts. But it is much better than losing everything. In reality, it is the master who pays the price of the transaction. But how will he unmask the culprit when the steward has the relieved debtors at his control and he has the figures correct, accounted for in the promissory notes? At the end, the master can only be impressed by the cleverness of the trick. Truly a masterpiece of cunning!

The point of the parable is not the dishonesty and bad faith of the crook. The Gospels in fact condemn all forms of

dishonesty. The point rather is the decisiveness, resourcefulness, and prudence of the steward when faced with the spectre of failure and poverty. Would that the children of light be as decisive and resourceful in securing their future—not by amassing wealth, but by laying up treasures of the kingdom.

When it comes to providing ourselves and our dear ones a good life and a promising future, we use our resourcefulness and abilities, sometimes by hook or by crook. If we apply the same resourcefulness in community building, in outreach programs and in worship activities, we help build up God's kingdom here on earth and lay up for ourselves inexhaustible treasures in heaven.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps 33:11, 19)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

The designs of his Heart are from age to age, to rescue their souls from death and keep them alive in famine.

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—In today's Gospel, Jesus presents the devious manager as an example of the wise and clever men and women who could survive the rough and tumble adventure of life by acting decisively and making full use of possessions entrusted to them. In like manner, we, too, must seize every opportunity to utilize all resources, material and spiritual, entrusted by God to us that our future salvation may be assured.

Penitential Act

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

(Pause)

All—I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

Clothe us, Lord God, with the virtues of the Heart of your Son and set us aflame with his love, that, conformed to his image, we may merit a share in eternal redemption.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading (Rom 15:14-21) *(Sit)*

At the close of his letter, Paul shares with the Christians in Rome his future plans. After preaching the Gospel in Asia and in Greece, he plans to visit them in Rome and then to go to Spain so that those who have not yet heard of Christ may know and believe in the Lord.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

I MYSELF AM CONVINCED about you, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to admonish one another. But I have written to you rather boldly in some respects to remind you, because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in performing the priestly service of the Gospel of God, so that the offering up of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to boast in what pertains to God. For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to lead the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum I have finished preaching the Gospel of Christ. Thus, I aspire to proclaim the Gospel not where Christ has already been

named, so that I do not build on another's foundation, but as it is written: Those who have never been told of him shall see, and those who have ever heard of him shall understand.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 98)

R—The LORD has revealed to the nations his saving power.

1. Sing to the LORD a new song,/ for he has done wondrous deeds;/ his right hand has won victory for him,/ his holy arm. **(R)**

2. The LORD has made his salvation known:/ in the sight of the nations he has revealed his justice./ He has remembered his kindness and his faithfulness/ toward the house of Israel. **(R)**

3. All the ends of the earth have seen/ the salvation by our God./ Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands./ Break into song; sing praise. **(R)**

Alleluia (Ps 119:34) *(Stand)*

All—Alleluia, alleluia. Whoever keeps the word of Christ, the love of God is truly perfected in him. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Lk 16:1-8)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
All—Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS SAID to his disciples, "A rich man had a steward who was reported to him for squandering his property. He summoned him and said, 'What is this I hear about you? Prepare a full account of your stewardship, because you can no longer be my steward.' The steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, now that my master is taking the position of steward away from me? I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I shall do so that, when I am removed from the stewardship, they may welcome me into their homes.' He called in his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, 'How much do you owe my master?' He replied,

'One hundred measures of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note. Sit down and quickly write one for fifty.' Then to another he said, 'And you, how much do you owe?' He replied, 'One hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note; write one for eighty.' And the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently. For the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than the children of light.

—The Gospel of the Lord.

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us pray to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that we may be enterprising and use our gifts and talents for the spread of his kingdom. May we give witness to our Christian faith in word and in deed. With confidence, we pray:

R—Lord, listen to our prayers.

C—For all Christians: may they not bury their talents but use them in works of justice and charity so that they may receive the reward meant for God's good and faithful servants. We pray: (**R**)

C—For our beloved country: may peace and justice reign in our land, may our people build a society on mutual respect and harmony, and may there be an end to all division. We pray: (**R**)

C—For our political leaders and government officials: may they use their talents and office not for selfish gains, and put a stop to systematic corruption that mires our people in poverty. We pray: (**R**)

C—For those who suffer, those who are severely tried, and those who grow cold in their faith: may they know the compassion and comfort of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We pray: (**R**)

C—For all of us gathered in this celebration: may the Lord keep us all in his loving care, bring security and understanding to our families, and grant harmony and spirit of cooperation to our communities and parishes. We pray: (**R**)

C—Let us pray in silence for the needs of our community and for our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: (**R**)

P—Lord Jesus, you are with us always. Strengthen us with your presence and turn our sorrow into joy. You who live and reign for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



Presentation of the Gifts

(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—O God, Father of mercies, who, because of the great love with which you loved us, with untold goodness gave us your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that being perfectly united with him, we may offer you worthy homage.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface (The Boundless Charity of Christ)

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For raised up high on the Cross, he gave himself up for us with a wonderful love and poured out blood and water from his pierced side, the wellspring of the Church's Sacraments, so that, won over to the open heart of the Savior, all might draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (*Stand*)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord,...

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom,...

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion

(*Kneel*)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy...

Communion Antiphon (Ps 31 (30): 20)

How great is the goodness, LORD, that you keep for those who fear you.

Prayer after Communion

(*Stand*)

P—Let us pray. (*Pause*)

Made partakers in your Sacrament of charity, we humbly implore your mercy, Lord, that we may be conformed to Christ on earth and merit to be coheirs of his glory on heaven. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the people

P—Bow down for the blessing. (*Pause*)

May the God of all consolation order your days in his peace and grant you the gifts of his blessing.

All—Amen.

P—May he free you always from every distress and confirm your hearts in his love.

All—Amen.

P—So that on this life's journey you may be effective in good works, rich in the gifts of hope, faith and charity, and may come happily to eternal life.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—Go forth, the Mass is ended.

All—Thanks be to God.



PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART *of Jesus*

Divine Jesus, you have said, "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," behold me kneeling at your feet, filled with a lively faith and confidence in the promises dictated by your Sacred Heart and pronounced by Your adorable lips. I come to ask this favor: *(Here silently mention your petitions).*

To whom can I turn if not to you whose Heart is the source of all graces and merits? Where should I seek if not in the treasure which contains all the riches of your kindness and mercy? Where should I knock if not at the door through which God gives himself to us and through which we go to God? I have recourse to You, Heart of Jesus. In you I find consolation when afflicted,

protection when persecuted, strength when burdened with trials, and light in doubt and darkness.

Dear Jesus, I firmly believe that you can grant me the grace I implore, even though it should require a miracle. You have only to will it, and my prayer will be granted. I admit that I am most unworthy of your favors, but this is not a reason for me to be discouraged. You are the God of Mercy and you will not refuse a contrite heart. Cast upon me a look of mercy, I beg of you, and your kind Heart will find in my miseries and weaknesses a reason for granting my prayers.

O Sacred Heart, whatever may be your decision with regard to my request, I will never stop adoring, loving, praising and serving you. My Lord Jesus, be pleased to accept this my act of perfect resignation to the decrees of your adorable Heart which I sincerely desire may be fulfilled by me and all your creatures forever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I know that there is but one thing impossible to you: to be without pity to those who are suffering or in distress. Look upon me, I beg of you, dear Jesus, and grant me the grace for which I humbly implore you through the Immaculate Heart of your most sorrowful Mother. You have entrusted me to her as her child, and her prayers are all-powerful with you. Amen.

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