

THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT (YEAR A) SUNDAY 15  
NOVEMBER 2020

## EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME

# TALENTS

### EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

#### *Reflecting on the Gospel*

##### *Faithful and wicked servants (Matthew 25: 14-30)*

Matthew's fifth and last block of Jesus' teaching (chapters 23, 24, and 25) focus the note of urgency, calling God's people to be ready to welcome God's reign. Last week the Gospel reading was the narrative of the wise and foolish bridesmaids (Matthew 25: 1-13). This week's Gospel reading is the narrative of the faithful and wicked servants (Matthew 25: 14-30). While the wise bridesmaids needed simply to be prepared, the faithful servants were required to be active and to make full use of all that their master had entrusted to them. Waiting for the Lord to come is not a passive but an active commitment. Waiting for the Lord to come is not world denying but world affirming.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *talents*.

#### *Extracts from the Gospel passage (Matthew 25: 14-18)*

Jesus said, 'The kingdom of heaven is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability.

Then he went away.

The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents.

In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents.

But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.'

#### *Gospel prayer*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
all that we have comes from you.  
Teach us so to use  
what you have given us,  
that our lives may praise your name;  
now and always.  
Amen.

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**ENGAGING WITH THE THEME AT HOME**

*Reflecting and meditating*

Reflect on the narrative of the faithful and wicked servants in Matthew 25: 14-30:

- what details in the passage catch your attention?
- what big ideas does the passage spark in your mind?
- what most touches your heart in the passage?
- what most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage?

*Thinking and talking*

- how do you interpret the unequal distribution?
- how do you understand the references to talents?
- how would you like to work for that master?
- how do you feel about the treatment of the slave who was given one talent?
- how should we interpret this narrative for today?

*Using your Bible*

Explore the springboard for Matthew's narrative in his primary source Mark, and explore comparable material in Luke's Gospel:

- Mark 13: 34
- Luke 19: 12-27

Explore passages in the Old Testament that resonate with this narrative:

- Psalm 90: 1-19
- Proverbs 20: 4
- Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-18

*Exploring online*

- explore interpretations of Matthew 25: 14-30, the parable of the talents
- explore images of the parable of the talents
- explore good and bad practice in talent shows

*Drawing on experience*

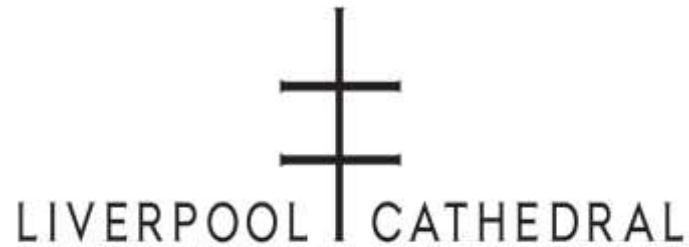
- reflect on your talents and how you exercise them
- reflect on the talents you recognise in others and how you affirm and nurture them
- reflect on how your church is enriched by the talents of the participants

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*Creating and making*

- create a collage of images exploring Matthew's parable of the talents
- create a poster putting the spotlight on talents in your community
- create a display of crafts that reveal talents
- create a reflection, poem, or prayer on talents

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## **EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME**

Each week we are inviting people in their homes to look forward to those Sunday services that follow the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel readings. We employ the SIFT approach (Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking) to encourage reflection on the Sunday Gospel. We are suggesting a variety of ways in which people of all ages, and households working together, may engage with the Gospel reading and celebrate that engagement with shared activities.

Our invitation then is for you to share your reflections, prayers and photos of your creative work with the Cathedral by emailing them to [Nelson.Pike@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk](mailto:Nelson.Pike@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk)

These materials have been developed by the Canon Theologian of Liverpool Cathedral working in collaboration with the staff team here at the Cathedral, and with sponsorship and support from the St Mary's Centre in Wales and the St Christopher's College Trust.



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