

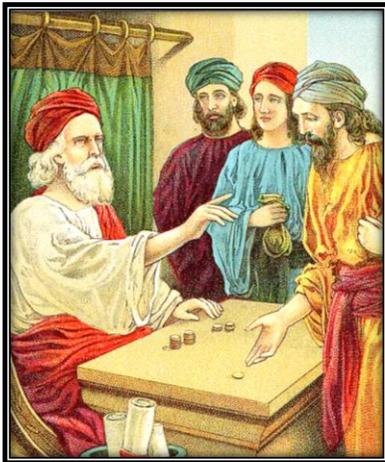
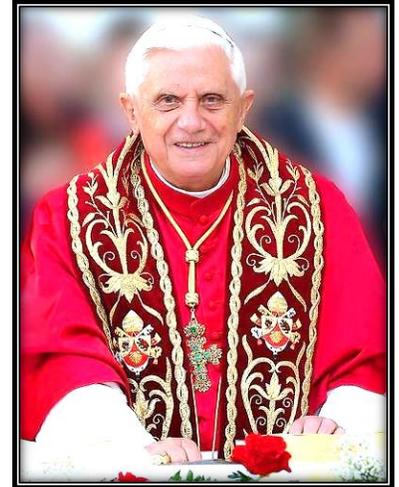


## THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

(BENEDICT XVI ANGELUS, Saint Peter's Square, Sunday, 13 November 2011)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The word of God of this Sunday — the second to last Sunday of the liturgical year — warns us of the transience of our earthly existence and invites us to live it as a pilgrimage, keeping our gaze fixed on the destination for which God has created us. Moreover, since He made us for Himself (cf. St Augustine, Confessions 1, 1), He is our ultimate destination and the meaning of our existence. Death, followed by the Last Judgment, is an obligatory stage to pass through in order to reach this definitive reality. The Apostle Paul says: “the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night” (1 Thess 5:2), that is, without warning. May knowledge of the glorious return of the Lord Jesus spur us to live in an attitude of watchfulness, waiting for His manifestation and in constant remembrance of His first Coming. In the well-known Parable of the Talents — recounted by the Evangelist Matthew (cf. 25: 14-30) — Jesus tells the story of three servants to whom their master entrusted his property, before setting out on a long journey. Two of them behaved impeccably, doubling the value of what they had received. On the



contrary, the third buried the money he had received in a hole. On his return, the master asked his servants to account for what he had entrusted to them and while he was pleased with the first two he was disappointed with the third. Indeed, the servant who had hidden his talent and failed to make it increase in worth had calculated badly. He behaved as if his master were never to return, as if there would never be a day on which he would be asked to account for his actions.

With this parable Jesus wanted to teach His disciples to make good use of His gifts: God calls every person and offers talents to all, at the same time entrusting each one with a mission to carry out. It would be foolish to presume that these gifts are an entitlement, just as failing to use them would mean failing to achieve our purpose in life. In commenting on this Gospel passage

Saint Gregory the Great noted that the Lord does not let anyone lack the gift of His charity, of His love. He wrote: “brothers, it is necessary that you pay the utmost attention to preserving love in everything you must do” (Homilies on the Gospel, 9, 6). After explaining that true charity consists in loving enemies as well as friends, he added: “if someone lacks this virtue, he loses every good he possesses, he is deprived of the talent he received and is cast out into the darkness” (ibid.).

Dear brothers and sisters, let us accept the invitation to be watchful, of which the Scriptures frequently remind us! This is the attitude of those who know that the Lord will return and that He will wish to see the fruits of His love in us. Charity is the fundamental good that no one can fail to bring to fruition and without which every other good is worthless (cf. 1 Cor 13:3). If Jesus loved us to the point of giving His life for us (cf. 1 Jn 3:16), how can we not love God with the whole of ourselves and love one another with real warmth? (cf. 1 Jn 4:11). It is only by practicing charity that we too will be able to share in the joy of Our Lord. May the Virgin Mary teach us active and joyful watchfulness on our journey towards the encounter with God.

([https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/angelus/2011/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_ang\\_20111113.pdf](https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/angelus/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_ang_20111113.pdf))