



**Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 5, 2017**

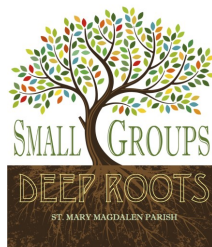
GOSPEL MATTHEW 23:1-12

Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example.

For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens hard to carry and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues, greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.'

As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.'
You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers.
Call no one on earth your father;
you have but one Father in heaven.
Do not be called 'Master';
you have but one master, the Christ.

The greatest among you must be your servant.
Whoever exalts himself will be humbled;
but whoever humbles himself will be exalted."





Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time November 5, 2017

Christ spoke more about money and possessions than any other topic in the Gospels, other than the kingdom of God, yet he didn't have a Church to run or a family to support. He did so, because he knew these were the very obstacles that were keeping people from reaching the kingdom of God. Giving is a crucial element that needs to be preached and practiced. Each year, we review our giving in light of our relationship with God and His mission.

Stewardship is everything we do after we say "We Believe." It's been said that people have the time and money for whatever they value the most. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Our "treasure" signifies our priorities—that which we value most. We ask ourselves where in my priority list is 1.) God 2.) God's priorities and 3.) Christ's mission as lived out through Church. In short, is God first in my life?

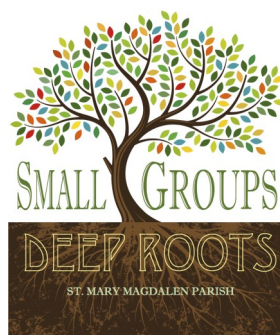
1. How do my actions reflect what I value most?

(for example, if I value entertainment, I go out to the movies and shows, dinners out, dancing, etc. If I value family, I find time to spend with my children, grandchildren, spouse, etc.)

2. My spending is one indicator of what I value. This past week, how did I spend money: family, church, pastimes, hobbies, entertainment, etc. Based on this, what do I value? Share if you'd like.

3. Sacrificial Giving is really about faith. How is my relationship with God being stretched or strengthened when I think of issues of money and possessions?

Challenge of the Week: Spend time in prayer this November Month of Gratitude in the Divine Mercy Chapel at St. Mary Magdalen in gratitude for the many blessings you have received.





Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 12, 2017

GOSPEL MT 25:1-13

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

"The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps.

Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'

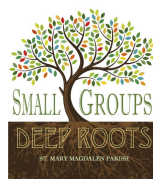
Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.'

While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him.

Then the door was locked.

Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.'

Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour."





Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time November 12, 2017

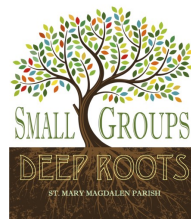
The readings reflect the “end times.” Are we ready for when the Lord comes? Do our words and actions reflect our faith.

1. God is Wisdom. The Bible asks us to seek Wisdom and to seek God and God’s kingdom first. How do I place God first in all things?
2. The Gospel is about the Second Coming. Am I prepared for Jesus to come into my life in a definitive and final way? How do I prepare daily for his coming?
3. Do I put priorities on things not of God, thinking that there will be time later for God’s works and the things of God? If so, what areas do I need to change?
4. The Bishops of Vatican II said, “The split between the faith which many possess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age.” (Gaudium et Spes, 43) Is there a split between my commitment to God and my daily habits and ways of living? How can I tell?

Challenges of the Week:

A. Make a commitment to value God above all else. If you have not done so yet, make a written financial commitment to support and carry out Christ’s mission and ministries for the coming year.

B. Spend time in prayer this November Month of Gratitude in the Divine Mercy Chapel at St. Mary Magdalen in gratitude for the many blessings you have received.





Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time November 19, 2017

GOSPEL MT 25:14-30

When the Jesus told his disciples this parable: "A man going on a journey called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them.

To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one--to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

Immediately the one who received five talents went and traded with them, and made another five. Likewise, the one who received two made another two. But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried his master's money.

After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. The one who had received five talents came forward bringing the additional five. He said, 'Master, you gave me five talents. See, I have made five more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.'

Then the one who had received two talents also came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I

have made two more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy.'

Then the one who had received the one talent came forward and said, 'Master, I knew you were a demanding person, harvesting where you did not plant and gathering where you did not scatter; so out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground. Here it is back.'

His master said to him in reply, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I did not plant and gather where I did not scatter? Should you not then have put my money in the bank so that I could have got it back with interest on my return? Now then! Take the talent from him and give it to the one with ten.

For to everyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And throw this useless servant into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.'"





Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 19, 2017

GOSPEL MT 25:14-30

The parable of the Talents is about the second coming. God has given each of us talents and gifts and will ask at the end of our life what did we do with what we were given.

1. What are my talents and gifts with which God has blessed me?
2. What am I doing with those gifts? Am I increasing? Or decreasing? Do I find excuses to bury my talents? Or do I use my gifts and talents to increase God's kingdom? If there are gifts which I have buried, what can I do to uncover them and start using them again?

From *USSCB Stewardship: A Disciples Response, 1993*

A Christian steward is one who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.

3. How do I return with increase the many blessings I have received?

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