

A - Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time - November 15, 2020

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Although a few elections are unsettled pending recounts and run-offs ... for the most part ... our National ... State ... and Local ... stewardship accountability exercises are now complete ... and ... as we do every ... couple years ... to some of our incumbent public servants we said: **'Well done**, ... good and faithful servant. ... I will give you great responsibilities. 'To others we said: **'(Go)** You wicked, lazy servant! ... into the darkness outside, where there will be **wailing** and **grinding** of teeth.' ... And ... to those new faces we elected ... we said: "Here! take our talents ... **but** ... we will be back in two, four or six years to settle accounts with you."

And so ... what will happen between our National ... State ... and Local ... elections? Well, some precious **few** of these elected stewards, will have the great dedication, courage, energy and vision ... to find opportunities to begin new initiatives ... abandon unworkable ones ... and actually provide real leadership and true statesmanship. Others ... **hopefully** few ... will ... arrogantly ... see our trust as an opportunity for personal gain ... perhaps financial ... perhaps personal power ... for **dishonorable** ends. Some of these will be found out ... and their careers will end with scandalous tabloid headlines. But many ... perhaps even most of these stewards will look ahead to that exercise ... two, four or six years from now ... and ... knowing that we ... the electorate can be a **demanding** master ... especially ... where our talents ... (our dollars) ... are concerned ... they will play it safe ... and just bury our talents in the ground ... and spend their time in office doing as little as possible. ... And so ... a few years later ... we will get to do the whole thing again ... once more determining accountability ... once more deciding who is faithful ... who is trustworthy ... and who is not. And ... of course ... faithfulness ... trustworthiness and accountability **are** what Our Lord is talking about.

He has entrusted each of us with many different talents ... different gifts ... different blessings. And ... sadly ... we so often hear ... about how these gifts are squandered.

Our God has entrusted us with the stewardship of this planet and we have all been blessed with its rich bounties. ... And ... all things considered ... the extinction or near extinction ... in recent times ... of many species ... the decimation of our forests ... the pollution of our air and waterways ... and our many other environmental failings ... would lead many to the conclusion that our stewardship has been deplorable. Will not our Master call for an accounting?

Some are blessed with great earthly riches ... and yet do nothing to alleviate the suffering of

those who have not been so blessed. Is this not counter ... to what Jesus asks of us and will He **not** ... call for an accounting?

In the past several years ... we have heard much about those entrusted with others sustenance ... their wealth ... their livelihoods ... and the varied ways that trust has been ... and is even yet ... being betrayed. Will not the Master call for an accounting?

One of the greatest gifts God can give is that of our children. Some of these gifts are callously aborted ... after God is told: "thanks, but no thanks". ... Others entrusted with these gifts ... some parents ... some teachers ... some day-care workers ... even some clergy have contemptibly abused them. Our Master **will** call for an accounting

What about the gift of our faith itself? Is it a Sunday faith that's dug up for an hour or so on Saturday afternoon or Sunday and then remains buried the rest of the week? Or is it a faith that is lived ... day in ... day out ... every day? Is it a faith that is nurtured ... a faith that grows ... a faith that is ultimately shared ... proudly ... with others? Will not our Master call for an accounting?

Yes ... Our Lord has entrusted each of us with many talents ... with many gifts and many blessings. And He challenges us today ... to examine them ... examine our stewardship ... even as He will. And unlike our public elections ... where we are called on by our society to judge others ... this is a private exercise in accountability. We are called on to look at our own talents ... our own gifts ... and our stewardship.

I am not called to judge you or your gifts ... but rather the gifts that I have been given ... as a husband ... as a father ... as a Christian ... as a Catholic ... as a Catechist ... as a clergyman ... in my relationship with God. And in doing so I might think of all these ... as offices to which I have been elected. And the question ... I might ask is: If I were running for reelection ... as a husband ... as a father ... as a Christian ... would I deserve **my** vote. Sometimes I don't like the answer.

And ... of course ... our loving Lord too ... our Master ... will ultimately demand an accounting from **each** of us. And again ... unlike our elections it will **not** happen in two, four or six years or any other **predictable** timetable. St. Paul tells us: that we need to "stay alert and sober ... the day of the Lord **will** come ... like a thief at night."