

Feast of Christ the King and close of the Church's Liturgical year happens this weekend. (Bishop Paprocki will also formally close our Forth Diocesan Synod at 2 pm this Sunday at the Cathedral with Mass.) We open the Liturgical Year with the season of Advent preparing for the Second and Glorious coming of Christ...and preparing to celebrate His first Advent into our world with the Nativity – Christmas. Therefore, next weekend we begin the new Liturgical Year on the First Sunday of Advent.

We experience our own cultural celebration of Thanksgiving...mindful of the many blessings the Lord has given us in our families and in our nation. With our gratitude for all of God's gifts and blessings, we reach out to share what God has blessed us with...our spiritual gift of faith and our material blessings. As good disciples, we care for...and tend...these blessings as good stewards...and in gratitude share them in love of God and neighbor.

Thank you to all who have given so much of themselves this year...especially all the sacrifice and generosity toward our campaign for the new addition – Gathering Space, Fellowship Hall and Parish Offices. The Lord has blessed us so very much and continues to enrich our lives through and in this wonderful facility. How did we do without it? Look what a difference it has made in our own attitudes of being a welcoming and very hospitable community for each other and all those who come to us. This has made a deep impact on us and our whole community! Praise the Lord!

Talent is a word we use to describe gifts and abilities someone has and uses...just think of the many programs that carry that word, for example... 'America Has Talent'...and many others. Jesus uses that word in His parable/story about a man going on a journey who 'called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them.' The scriptural word refers to a huge fortune...a big responsibility...distributed in differing amounts to different servants. Two of the servants invest and use what was given them to return them to the master with increase...big increase. However, one simply was afraid and buried the treasure...nothing was lost...but nothing was gained.

The story really was not about money (like how much money I can accumulate before my death). But it was pointing to one's preparedness with responsible activity or irresponsible or lazy inactivity at the Advent of the Kingdom of God...the coming of the Son of Man and the final day of judgement. The three stories/parables (the two servants...the ten maidens...and now the talents) of Jesus leading up to this lesson help paint the proper picture of what makes up responsible behavior in preparation for the coming of the Son of Man.

Positive action...not fearful or lazy inaction...that is the point and focus, which prepares one to 'share the master's joy.' We cannot just protect our territory...so to speak...but live our faith...grow in our faith...and share our faith with others. Pope Francis wants a church that gets into the stuff of life and gets a little dirty doing it. Look at the early Church...missionaries going, serving, proclaiming, welcoming...and preparing a world for the coming of The Son of Man!

This Sunday we hear the lesson Jesus teaches about the actual and final Coming of the Son of Man...in glory and in judgement... 'The Feast of Christ the King.' It focuses on the proper behavior...action or inaction...as we await the coming of the Son

of Man. Jesus has taught us about how important our ministry...mission...is to others when He says 'whoever accepts you accepts Me...and not only Me...but the one who sent Me.' Jesus boils it down to... 'Whatever you did to the least of my brothers...you did to me.'

We may need to ask ourselves about what we are doing to be full-fledged and intentional disciples...actively living our faith and committed to growing in our faith. We may also consider how we are actively involved in spreading and sharing our faith...in an active and enthusiastic way...with others. The idea is are we not only being a disciple...but growing as a disciple...and especially actively making disciples! So...how are we doing as a parish...as an individual Christian?