

Ennobling Suffering



ST. JOSEPH'S HIGHGATE

2020 Nov 15

The parable in the gospel for today is simple. A man goes on a journey and leaves varying sums of money with three of his slaves, with the expectation that each would invest the money while he was gone in order to gain positive returns. The sum of money each slave is given is described in talents. The amount of one talent is uncertain, but it is generally understood to be a very large amount of money, some estimating it would be equivalent to one million dollars today.

It was common in that time for the slaves of a household to be instructed to invest their owner's money in order to generate income from usury for the owner. Usury is the practice of lending money at unreasonably high rates of interest. The slaves would often get to keep a cut of the money earned. In general, scripture speaks against this immoral form of

lending money, and Jews were not permitted to engage in usury with other Jews.

It is likely that Jesus' audience would have understood that this in this parable, this was the master's expectation, when he gave the money to his slaves. This idea is supported by the 3rd slave's description of the master. He said, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter." This master was a man who increased his own wealth with very little work of his own, requiring those whom he had power over to do his dirty work, and on top of that, is described as a very harsh man.

When we understand the economic and power realities present in this story; and when we consider the teachings of Jesus, we perceive this story as being critical of the immoral and corrupt methods of the master. The 3rd slave is the hero in this story because he not only refuses to participate in the extortion his master demanded of him, knowing well it would cost him; and he returned the money to the master. He was honest and moral. The master's tantrum at the end of the parable further illustrates his own greed.

Quite often, we have interpreted this story in ways that justify our own capitalist tendencies. It is often read as a story about efficiency, investment, and industriousness; however, these interpretations ignore the complicated economic and power dynamics Jesus' audience faced.

As we consider this 3rd slave to be the one in the story we are to emulate, we begin to think about the ways we are complicit in economic systems that disadvantage the many for the benefit of the few. And then we realize that, like this slave, we may need to miss opportunities to increase our own capital in order to reduce our complicity in the corruption of our systems. This slave chose to risk his own promotion, his own well-being, and his own safety in order to avoid participating in activities that took advantage of the vulnerable.

Sometimes the teachings of Jesus are hard. Sometimes they call us to risk. Sometimes they even call us to suffer – never for the sake of suffering, but always for the sake of those who are already suffering. This is the life he lived. This is the example he showed us. This is the lessons he taught us. This is what Jesus would do.



Oremus

Loving and Gracious God,
You always want what is best for us.
You want what is best for all of creation.
You not only invest yourself in our world
but you invest Yourself in our lives.
You endow us with gifts and
abilities that can be stewarded towards
human and nature flourishing.
Open our eyes and ears to the truth
in this parable.
Show us where we end up playing it safe
rather than investing our lives in the work
You have started through Your Kingdom.
May we be faithful towards the trust
You have placed in us and give our lives to
the good work of Your Kingdom. Amen.



Christmas Masses

We are now preparing for our Christmas Masses. To enable maximum attendance in compliance with applicable COVID-19 guidelines, the Parish will offer additional Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Bookings for these Masses are now open on the Parish's Diocesan website:
<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/highgate/events/>. Attendance at all Masses remains capped at 90 persons, so please pre-book now for Christmas!

Thank you

In September we asked for your help to financially support St Joseph's through the annual planned giving program. The Covid-19 Pandemic has been hard on everyone and, as a result of our church being closed for an extended period, the income that it received was significantly reduced. You responded graciously and generously to the call for stewardship, despite the challenging times that we currently are in. We would like to say Thank You to each and every one of you for your generosity and your support.

The Parish Finance Committee and Fr George





Proud of You, Our Stewards

These have been testing times for many of us. We hope that St Joseph's has been an oasis for some quiet time, prayer and reflection. Our volunteer Stewards have played a truly vital role in helping to keep our church open during these Covid times. Thanks to them, when some restrictions were eased, we were able to continue with our full schedule of Masses and, now that we are in lockdown again, their dedication and commitment has enabled us to keep the church open for private prayer. They turn up faithfully and regularly each time to assist as Stewards and to ensure our comfort, health and safety in church. I know you will join me in extending our grateful thanks to them for all that they do.

The Parish Taskforce and Fr. George

Welcome

Please Come In

The church is
open for prayer

On Wed. 10AM - 11AM

On Sat.& Sun.

10AM – 12PM

No Congregational worship

Mass Online.

We will be live streaming
our Masses starting this weekend.

Weekdays 9:30AM
Sundays 12Noon and 7PM

We are both on our website
stjosephshighgate.org.uk

and on our YouTube channel;



St. Josephs Highgate



Since this is our first attempt at doing this,
we ask you to be patient as we struggle
with our weak internet.

Eternal Rest

+Finbarr Casey

+Marie Nasser

+Teresa Vecjheshy

+Jackie Taylor

+Josephine Talbot

Perpetual Light

Josephine Dyne Scott

Phil O'Keefe

Noel Kelly



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