Good Stewardship: The Parable of the Talents

Sunday Homily Transcript | Father Benjie

Well, good afternoon.

Two weeks ago, I watched a very interesting video on YouTube. The title of the video is “Lottery Winners Who Lost All Their Money in the Blink of an Eye.”

This interesting video features some lucky lottery winners who won millions, who won billions, and one would say they should be happy because their future will be secured. And this is the expectation.

But these lucky lottery winners are now unlucky because they lost it all due to impulsive buying, lack of financial knowledge and planning, and by making wrong decisions.

In our life, the consequences of our wrong decisions and actions can be severe and life-changing.

Today, the topic of our reflection is all about good stewardship.

Our God, who is generous and kind, expects all of us to be good stewards of all the blessings we receive from Him.

Now the question is, how can we be good stewards of our time, our talents, and our treasures?

Before I answer that question, please allow me to share with you a funny joke about heaven. Disclaimer: This is a joke, so it must be funny.

If you don't like it, pretend that you like it, because it's a mortal sin if you don't laugh at the jokes of Father Benjie. Right, Kevin? Kevin Higgins here. Here is the joke.

A faithful, loving, and kind married woman dies and meets Saint Peter at the gates of heaven. Her name is Martha.

Saint Peter says, “Martha, before you enter, you must spell one word. Don't worry, Martha. It is very easy. You must spell the word love.” So she easily spells L-O-V-E, and Saint Peter allows her to enter the gate of heaven.

Several months later, Saint Peter asks Martha to watch the gates of heaven while he runs an errand.

He tells Martha to use the same rule for new arrivals: to spell the word love.

Two hours later, Martha's ex-husband Michael shows up at the gate. Shocked, she asks what happened to her ex-husband, and Michael explains he had a heart attack. “Well,” she says, “to get in, you must spell one simple word.”

Michael asks what the word is, and Martha smiles sweetly. She says, “Czechoslovakia.”

You know what I mean, huh?

In today's Gospel, we heard the Parable of the Talents. And what is the meaning of this parable?

In biblical times, in ancient times, a talent was synonymous with a huge sum of money, and not a musical or artistic talent.

In this story, a master entrusts his money to his three servants: five talents to one, two talents to another, and one talent to the third.

After a long time, the master returns and asks them to give an account of his money.

The first two servants invested the money very well, and it doubled. The master was very happy.

The third servant, however, was afraid to lose the money and had decided to hide his money in the ground. As a result, he didn't get any gain from the money given to him.

The master was not happy with him and identified him as a lazy and wicked servant.

What is the meaning and the message of this parable?

The master in this parable is God, our Father, and we are the servants.

He gives us abundant blessings such as time, talents, and treasure, and we should use them wisely.

Good stewardship is the message of today's Gospel. First on the list, we must be good stewards of time.

Everyone is given the same amount of time: 24 hours a day, 168 hours each week.

Time is a precious gift given to us by God, but it can't be stored like grain in a barn. Once a moment passes, it's gone forever.

So how do we spend our time?

Well, according to the 2025 American Time Use Survey, Americans spend on average about eight hours of work, eight to nine hours of sleep, two hours of household chores, three hours on screens and social media, 1.5 hours eating, with the rest in leisure and other activities.

Time is more than just the constant ticking of a clock. It is imbued with profound spiritual significance.

A good steward of time means that every moment is a gift from God to be used with good intentions and good purpose.

Second, we must be good stewards of our talents.

Every person has been entrusted with talents such as natural abilities, spiritual gifts, creative skills, and life experiences. Your stewardship of talent is about recognizing those gifts and offering them

back to the Church and to the world, because your talent that was given to you by God is not meant to sit on a shelf.

So whether you sing, organize, build, teach, cook, listen, lead, or encourage, your gifts, your talents, are part of how God is building His Kingdom through you. So now I want you to identify how your talents can serve the parish, your family, your friends, and your community.

And please volunteer for parish ministries where your talents and gifts can support the mission of the Church.

Third, we must be good stewards of treasure. And I mean money, possessions, and financial resources.

Good stewardship of treasure means recognizing everything we have, including money, possessions, and resources, are gifts from God. And we are entrusted to manage them wisely, not to own absolutely.

The Bible does not teach that material goods are evil. It teaches that our possessions must be rightly used and shared.

So stewardship is more than asking, “How much can I keep?” It also asks, “How can I help other people with the resources that I have?”

I'm holding right now a $20 bill.

If I go to Panera after the Mass, this bill can buy me two coffees and a sandwich.

If I go to Chick-fil-A, I can buy a combo meal, but just one meal, just for me, right?

In the Philippines, where I grew up, this bill here can feed a family of four for a day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner for four.

What I'm trying to say here is all of you in front of me inside this church, we are all so blessed living in a first-world country like the United States.

We are receiving a lot of abundant blessings from the Lord.

But it comes with responsibility because God expects all of us to do our part in sharing those blessings.

Because one important aspect of the Parable of the Talents is accountability.

In the Parable of the Talents, the master came back and asked for an account of his money. Of course, he was happy with the two servants and they received the reward.

He was unhappy with the third servant, and he received his punishment.

These three servants represent all of us.

Who are you among these three servants? Are you the first two servants who became good and responsible? Or are you the third servant who was fearful, lazy, and irresponsible?

The master will come back again, but we don't know when.

Catholic teaching holds that Jesus Christ will come back again in glory to judge the living and the dead. And each person, you and me, will give an account of our life, about how we live our life on earth. And this account includes how we use the gifts entrusted to us: our time, our talents, and our treasure.

This teaching is not meant to frighten us or to scare us. This teaching is meant for us to open our eyes and be vigilant and to live our lives responsibly.

Now, to conclude our reflection this afternoon, I ask all of you to close your eyes for a moment.

By closing your eyes, now you have the chance to feel some relaxing moments of silence, some moments of peace.

Enjoy those moments now.

Right now, I ask you to let go of your worries and concerns.

I want you to concentrate and to focus.

Our world is getting noisier and busier each day, and as a result, we're losing our quiet time.

In our busy world, we're suffocated with so many things.

Now enjoy the sacred silence. Breathe. Inhale.

And please allow the Holy Spirit to inspire and guide you at this very moment.

Now you're entering a quiet moment of meditation and examination of your conscience.

Now I will be giving you some questions about yourself.

I want you to be honest and sincere when I ask you these questions.

Don't you worry. No one is listening to you, because only God can hear you.

Here are the questions.

Am I a good steward of the time given to me by God?

When was the last time I had a quiet moment with God?

When was the last time I had a good conversation with Him?

When was the last time I visited Jesus at the Adoration Chapel?

Do I use my time wisely?

Am I a good steward of my talents?

Which talent am I holding back?

Am I generous with my talents?

Do I use them to glorify God and to serve my neighbor?

Am I a good steward of my financial blessings and resources?

Am I aware that many people around me are struggling financially and they need help?

Are my eyes open to the needs of others, or am I becoming indifferent and trying to ignore them?

Please open your eyes.