

## **SERMON - Parable of the Talents, Sunday, September 16, 2018**

The time that we are given on this earth is very precious. "Time flies" is a very common expression. Truly the years fly by, and if we live to old age, life as we know it swiftly comes to an end. By the same token, there is no guarantee that we will even live to old age. Every day we never know if we will live to see another day, no matter how young or old we are and no matter how healthy we might be. Life itself, and everything that we have in life, is a precious gift from God. In Matthew 25:31-46 the Lord reveals to us how we will be judged on that final day. We are expected to use the abilities and means that God has given to us for our salvation and to serve others. A "talent" was a unit of monetary value in the time of our Savior. It is because of the parable of the talents that a unit of money now means in the English language a "gift, ability or skill." The Lord expects us to use whatever talents we have, whether it be the gift of teaching, or strength of the body, or the gift of a beautiful voice to sing, or artistic talent, or some specialized training or talent, such as woodworking, sewing, cooking, electrical work or construction, anything and everything is expected to be used for our salvation and to help others. Certainly this includes offering our voluntary service and ability to God and the Church. As in the parable today, even if we feel that we have only one talent, it is a sin if we bury that talent in the ground and not use and multiply that talent for the benefit of others. Do we waste our time with useless, unnecessary or even harmful things, or do we use all our strength and gifts for service of our Lord? Thus, as we leave the church today and go home, let us carry away the thought that time is short, that we must not lose it, that we must increase the treasure in our heart: the understanding of the Sacred Scripture which is given to us, the struggle against the evil and sin which live in us, to multiply kindness, mercy, justice, compassion, and sympathy in our life which the Lord has bequeathed to us. Everything—prayer, labor, life, joy, sorrow—the path of a human life which must pass under the sign of God—all must be before the face of Christ! And then every day, every hour, every moment will be filled with His sacred presence. And there will not be a day, or an hour, or a moment when we would live without God, outside of God, or far from God. And then our life will be not simply an existence from birth to death, but rather labor, work, building for God, ascent to the mountain of the Lord, where the Heavenly Father awaits us, Who will say to everyone who labored as much as he could: "Good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord." Amen!