

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells the story about a businessman who leaves town and entrusts his money with his workers made perfect sense to His audience at the time. Wealthy merchants and businessmen often had to travel abroad, and it took just a bit longer back then, and they had to leave the business to others to handle and take care of while they were gone. Why did Jesus tell this story, and what can it teach us? I think it speaks to us about how God deals with all of us, His disciples. First of all the parable speaks about how the master trusts his servants with his money. If he didn't, he wouldn't have left his money with them, to use in whatever way they thought was best. Now he gave them no guidelines, and there were no strings attached to the money. But, I think it was obviously a test to see if his workers were clever and smart and maybe even reliable in how they used the money he had entrusted to them. The master had a plan already in mind, he was going to reward those servants who were clever and industrious and faithful to him, and he was going to punish any of them who did nothing with his money. What we are looking at what the servants felt was their responsibility, what were they supposed to do with the money? Each of the servants was faithful to the master in their own way. The servant who buried the money was

irresponsible. Did he expect it to grow like a seed planted in the ground? We would all love to grow a money tree. The only way money can be productive is in circulation, and the master expected his servants to be productive with his money. Now, what do coins and a small lesson on economics have to do with the Kingdom of God? The Lord entrusts the people of His kingdom, all of us, with gifts and graces, and He gives us the freedom to use them as we think best. God gives us through grace and wisdom ways to use them in the best way. The parable of the talents shows us that God isn't crazy about indifference and an attitude that says it's not worth trying. God cares for those who use their talents and gifts for doing good. Those who are faithful with even a little are entrusted with more. But, those of us who neglect or squander what God has entrusted to us will lose what we have. There is a very important lesson here for all of us, we can't stand still in our Christian life. We either get and do more, or lose what we have. We either move toward God, or slip away. God expects us to nurture and develop the gifts He has given us and then generously return a portion with an increase. He doesn't want us to waste or hoard the gifts He has given us; He expects us to grow our gifts, use them wisely and be generous with them. Unfortunately, some of us

are not generous in proportion to all the God has given us. Fr. Vincent Capodanno, who was a Navy Chaplain killed in Vietnam and awarded the Medal of Honor for his bravery, he was known as the Grunt Padre. In one of his homilies he gave he said: “each of us has been given talents and ability by Almighty God. We should ask ourselves if we are using these to the best of our ability. If we don’t use them here, chances are we will not use them elsewhere either. There will always be an excuse.”