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*In November  
We Remember*

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Details on the times of online Masses and Prayers for the Covid 19 Crisis: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie>

**Holy & Saints Days: 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> November:** Monday: *Ss. Margaret of Scotland & Gertrude*  
Tuesday: *St. Elizabeth of Hungary* Wednesday: *The Dedication of the Basilicas of Ss Peter and Paul*  
Saturday: *St. The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**Sincere Thanks** to those who have sent in their collection envelopes, cheques and donations for the Parish during the past week. Please make cheques payable to “Malin Parochial”.

**November Parish Prayer Day.** Proposed Theme: Remembering our beloved dead. Next Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November, our parish of Malin prays for the 24 hours for Marriage & Family Life in such a way that the whole day and night are covered. This is part of a Movement of Continuous Prayer as other parishes and groups take on the prayer for the other days of the month. Everyone is invited to join in this prayer, either by taking on an hour, or by including this intention in your own prayer during that day. The Joy of Love: Pope Francis It consoles us to know that those who die do not completely pass away, and faith assures us that the risen Lord will never abandon us..... Indeed, “our loved ones are not lost in the shades of nothingness, hope assures us that they are in the good strong hands of God”.(256) The people who honour their dead are people who believe in eternal life.

**Knock Shrine:** As we face into the winter months and a new routine, why not set aside some time in the evenings for prayer and reflection online. This is something you might like to do as an individual or with members of your household. Share it with friends or neighbours and take part online (virtually) together. Join us online each Friday evening during the month of November as we come together virtually for a period of extended prayer and reflection. The theme for the month is ‘Comfort on the Journey’ as we draw comfort and peace from knowing that our loved ones now enjoy the light of Heaven. November 13<sup>th</sup>: Remembering Our Dearly Departed.. 20<sup>th</sup>: Comfort On The Journey. 27<sup>th</sup>: Facing The Future. Join us online for Rosary at 7pm, Mass at 7:30pm and Holy Hour at 8pm on our website [www.knockshrine.ie](http://www.knockshrine.ie)

**The Net:** The November edition is now available online, on [www.derrydiocese.org](http://www.derrydiocese.org). As always, it features a wide variety of news, interesting and inspiring interviews, articles and photos from parishes across the diocese. You are invited to read The Net, on the diocesan website, at your convenience.

**Counselling:** A professional confidential counselling service is available for couples or individuals through Accord at the Pastoral Centre, Carndonagh, Co. Donegal, F93 XP59. Contact 074 93 74103, e-mail [accordinishowen@gmail.com](mailto:accordinishowen@gmail.com) or book online: <https://www.accord.ie/services/marriage-and-relationship-counselling>. **Accord Inishowen** will be hosting a Virtual Interactive Marriage Preparation Programme (Pre-Marriage Courses) via Zoom on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2021. To book online: <https://www.accord.ie/services/marriage-preparation> or email: [accordinishowen@gmail.com](mailto:accordinishowen@gmail.com) for more info.

### 15 November, 2020. 33rd Sunday, Year A

Today’s gospel focuses on the kind of behaviour that will be tested in the Final Judgment. We are here and now writing the book of evidence for that judgement on the value of our lives. A key element is the use of the talents and opportunities God has given us.

**Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30 The parable of the Talents is a challenge to use our gifts to achieve what God expects from us**

Jesus told this parable to his disciples: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who, before going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been

trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’

But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

### **Scripture Reflection; Our Talents -Use them or lose them**

At first sight, today’s parable seems to suggest that the third servant took a prudent course of action—“I heard you were a hard man, reaping where you have not sown.” The scribes and Pharisees, towards whom it was directed, would argue: God demands perfection; the Law expresses his will; only a scrupulous observance of the Law can give us security. But God’s way is different: He wants an abundant harvest. Jesus wants us to know that salvation come to those who are prepared to risk their all for him. A talent is given to bear fruit, not to lie there unused. It may seem prudent not to risk, but in the end it is not what God expects of us.

### **In proportion to one’s ability**

We know from experience that different people have different abilities. A person with an ability to listen to others may not have the ability to be a good administrator. Someone who is well able to mend a leak or fix a washing machine may have little or no musical ability. An effective teacher may be a hopeless mechanic. We learn from experience whose good at what, and we relate to people accordingly. We tend to entrust people with tasks that are in proportion to their ability. We also learn from experience what our own abilities are, and what our limitations are, and we tend to take on tasks that correspond to our abilities and avoid tasks that do not. The rich man in today’s parable was well aware of the abilities of his servants. Before he set out on his journey he entrusted his property “to each in proportion to his ability.” He knew what each of his three servants was able for, and he only gave as much responsibility to each of them as each could carry. The man who received five talents of money was capable of making five more; the one who received two talents was capable of making two more; the one who received one talent was capable of making one more. The first two servants worked according to their ability. The third servant did not, giving his master back the one talent he had been given, instead of the two talents he was capable of gaining. What held this servant back from working according to his ability was fear. “I was afraid, and I went off and hid your talent in the ground.”

Many of us may find ourselves having some sympathy for the third servant, because, deep down, we are only too well aware how fear can hold us back and prevent us from doing what we are well capable of doing. Fear can be a much more powerful force in the lives of some than others. There can be many reasons for this. Those who have experienced a lot of criticism growing up can be slow to take a risk and may develop a fearful approach to life. We are familiar with the Irish proverb, Mol an óige agus tíochfaidh siad. Praise the young and they will make progress. The converse can also true. Criticise the young and they will be held back. Unfair criticism can stunt our growth and prevent us from reaching our God-given potential. We hide what we have been given in the ground. There it remains safe, but useless.

Jesus was only too well aware of the disabling power of fear in people’s lives. It is striking the number of times in the gospels he addresses people with the words, “Do not be afraid.” When Simon Peter fell down at Jesus’ knees saying, “Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man,” Jesus replied to him, “Do not be afraid, from now on it is people you will catch.” When fear threatened to hold Peter back, Jesus called him forward into a new way of life. Jesus was present to people in ways that released them from their fear. In particular, he did not want fear of failure to hold people back. He could cope with failure in others. He knew that many people could learn from failure. There was little to be learned from staying put. There was much to be learnt from striking out, even if failure was experienced along the way.

The tragedy of the third servant in the parable today is that, out of fear, he hid what had been entrusted to him, even though he had the ability to use it well. We have each been graced in some way by the Lord for the service of others. If I hide what the Lord has given me, others are thereby deprived. Most of us need a bit of encouragement to place our gifts at the disposal of others. Part of our baptismal calling is to give others courage, to encourage others. A couple of verses beyond where today’s second reading ends, Paul writes: “Encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.” In these difficult times for the church, the ministry of encouragement is all the more necessary. There is much to be learned from the mistakes of the past, but the Lord would not want us to go to ground. Now is not the time to hide our Good News in the ground out of fear. Rather, it is a time to encourage each other to share this treasure so that the church may become all that God is calling it to be.