

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEACONS

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A
Use Your Talents

Deacon Mark Kelly

“Talent” meant measure or money in ancient Greek but Jesus usage here makes an entrancing double meaning for us, such that the servants were given some resource and were held accountable for its use. (*Matt 25:14-30*) We might summarise “talent” as “God given ability” and Jesus alludes to the waste of God given ability. Elsewhere Luke’s gospel instructs us that, “To whom much is given, much will be required” (*Luke 12:48*). It is not the talents we start with that is important, but how we use them. We, who have been blessed with talents, wealth, knowledge, time, comfort and security, are expected to benefit others.

One in three people on the planet are “Christians” but, if we really lived as Jesus urges us to do, everyone would be! Sadly, many of us don’t live that example. Though we have heard the Good News and have been given abilities to proclaim it, like the servant with one talent, we timidly hoard our talent to ourselves rather than reaching out bravely announcing God’s Kingdom through our good lives and our generous sharing of talents and gifts with the world. Matthew’s parable warns us of the potential consequences of stashing our abilities and opportunities away rather than sharing them abundantly with others.

Followers of Jesus should be brave and outgoing, using our talents for the Kingdom. Pope Francis in *Laudate Si* quotes the South African Bishop’s Conference urging us that, “Everyone’s talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God’s creation.” (*LS 202*) Many are more concerned with selfish desires than the common good. In his new encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, the Pope counsels us that “the heroes of the future will be those who can break with this unhealthy mind-set and determine respectfully to promote truthfulness, aside from personal interest.” (FT)