

SUNDAY PLUS

Choose well



Using the time

by Fr Denis McBride C.Ss.R.

Today's Gospel parable opens with a rich man who hears accusations that his steward has been mismanaging the affairs of the estate. The master calls the steward to account, asks him for a final reckoning and gives him a notice of dismissal. The dismissal is not immediate, which gives the steward some time.

The steward considers a future of unemployment. He does not spend long discounting digging and begging as new means of income, so he hits on the idea of calling in his master's debtors so he can reduce the total they owe. He calls them in one by one: secrecy is part of his plan. He wants to be able to depend on their future kindness: after the new transaction, they will be in his debt.

The parable is sometimes referred to as the story of the Dishonest Steward, but this title is unfortunate. Although the steward appears dishonest, it is his ingenuity and resolute action that is commended by Jesus – not his dishonesty. The focus is on how one man uses the time left to him to turn personal disaster into a shared opportunity, thereby securing his own future.

Jesus believes that you can learn from anyone, even children and dysfunctional families, and now stewards who are skilled at lucrative arithmetic. Learn how one man can turn a private affliction into a shared triumph rather than spending his time uselessly, bemoaning his lost status. How do we use the time that is left to us?

Fr Denis McBride's many books, CDs and DVDs are available from Redemptorist Publications: www.rpbooks.co.uk

Which way?

by Max Mathews

We all make daily choices with our money: some good, some perhaps not-so-good. The Bible is clear: you cannot serve, or love, both God and money.

In today's reading, Amos warns us against "tramp[ing] the needy" and on those who are poor by skimping on the measure, selling the sweepings with the wheat and cheating with dishonest scales.

This issue isn't specifically about money, but about integrity: if you can be honest in small matters, like handing over the correct change, for example, you will be trusted to be shrewd with larger matters. Look after the pennies, and the pounds will look after themselves.

In themselves, being rich or poor isn't good or bad. How we choose to act with our riches and resources

– our emotional strengths and individual skills, as well as our chequebook – determines our spiritual richness.

Some lead lives rich in kindness and generosity; others lead lives which are spiritually poorer. Which will you choose?

Max Mathews is a young Catholic who is studying to become a journalist.

"The Lord's relationship with his people is a personal relationship, always. It is a person to person relationship. He is the Lord, and the people have a name. Persons have a name. It is not a dialogue between the Almighty and the masses. Rather, it is something personal."

Pope Francis

Young service

by Natasha Pritchard

Money makes the world go round – there's no denying its importance, either in the days when today's Gospel was first heard, or as we're hearing it now. How, then, do we encourage our young people to serve God, when everything in our society points to the worship of money?


Young people must be given the opportunity to understand how service can give life meaning and purpose.

As part of our youth ministry, we regularly run homeless missions in Liverpool. When we started, we knew it would be worthwhile, but we had no idea how transformative it would be for the young people who get involved. After each mission, we're flooded with messages describing

real encounters of service and how much it touched their own lives.

We must teach the next generation to reach for higher goals, to find meaning not in material goods, but in serving others, giving their time and talents, and building the Kingdom of God on earth. This is the real treasure that lasts.

Natasha Pritchard is a hospital chaplain who also works in youth ministry.

Lord, you know me better than I know myself. You know the people and the dreams that are closest to my heart. I offer them all to you today  Amen.

Today:
Amos 8:4-7
1 Timothy 2:1-8
Luke 16:1-13

Monday:
Ezra 1:1-6
Luke 8:16-18

Tuesday:
Ezra 6:7-8, 12, 14-20
Luke 8:19-21

Wednesday:
Ezra 9:5-9
Luke 9:1-6

Thursday:
Haggai 1:1-8
Luke 9:7-9

Friday:
Haggai 1:15 – 2:9
Luke 9:18-22

Saturday:
Zechariah 2:5-9, 14-15
Luke 9:43-45

Next Sunday:
Amos 6:1, 4-7
1 Timothy 6:11-18
Luke 16:19-31