

FATHER MARK SCHULTE
HOMILY
TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C)
September 21, 2025

“Use Them Well”

My Brothers and Sisters, in the Gospel Jesus tells the story about a servant who was dishonest with the wealth that his employer had entrusted him with. As he was about to be fired, he made underhanded arrangements with those who owed his employer money, so that they would take care of him after he was fired. After being discovered for what he did, his master commended him for his shrewdness. People of the world are of a like mind even though they may be opponents in some way (Lk 16:1-13).

God has given each one of us a certain amount of this world’s wealth to manage. He expects us to appreciate what he has given us and to use it well. We are not to use it dishonestly or for dishonorable purposes. We are to use it in a way that will solidify a place in heaven for ourselves.

At the end of our life, God will hold us accountable for how well we used his gifts. God has entrusted to us two distinctly different kinds of gifts that we are to use judiciously. We have already spoken about the gifts that are the wealth of this world, money, and other earthly temporal goods. We are also given spiritual gifts, the gifts of faith, the Sacraments and His Holy Church through which God has given us Himself, the greatest gift of all. Each person must understand the distinction between the two types of gifts, earthly and spiritual. The spiritual gifts are of the most value for they have eternal benefits, and we take them with us after we die (CCC 768, 1812, 1831).

Unfortunately, there are those that do not bother to make this distinction and then the earthly gifts become more important to them. The earthly wealth begins to take precedence over our allegiance to and our worship of God. If we die in this condition God will not only remove the earthly material gifts but the spiritual gifts as well. And then we will be left standing outside knocking on the door, but not allowed to come in. For Jesus will say to us, “I do not know you” (Lk 13:25-27).

We cannot serve two masters, material wealth, and God. Be attentive to God above all else. Use the things of this world for good purposes but do not allow them to overpower you.

Those who no longer come to mass on Sunday have made their choice. Those who no longer attempt to grow in their faith have made their choice too. Mammon and the things of this world have become their God. This condition didn’t happen overnight or all of a sudden. It happened slowly over time, imperceptibly like the frog in boiling water. The missing of mass occasionally here, the neglect of spiritual opportunities there, and before you know it, God who is the greatest gift is no longer in our life. Jesus calls us to set our priorities and to set them well. We are to put as much effort into our spiritual welfare as we put into our earthly endeavors. Children should learn

to set these spiritual priorities from their parents. And when this doesn't happen the parents wonder why their children walk away from the faith at a very young age.

The word trustworthy is used several times in this Gospel passage. God has entrusted to each of us many gifts both temporal and spiritual. Have we been found trustworthy in our use of them? Adam and Eve fell from grace because they took their trust away from God and then put it in the devil who deceived them. Put your trust in God, and all else will fall into its proper place, especially our priorities.

NOTE: CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church