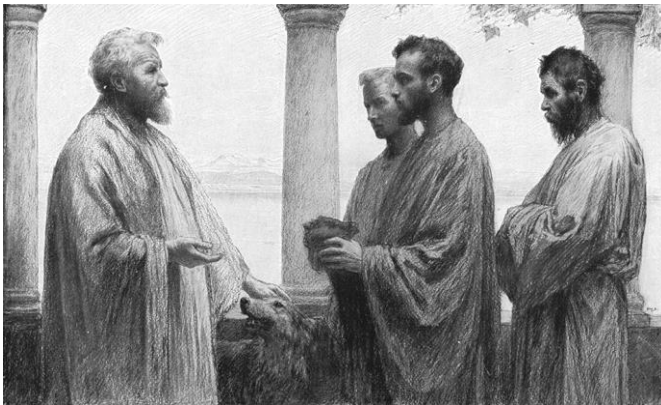


The Parish Church of St Matthew  
Northampton

# The Second Sunday before Advent

Year A



*The responsibility of talent*

## The Parish Mass

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023

10.15 am



## Welcome to St Matthew's Parish Church

The parable of the talents in another extract from Matthew's Eschatological Sermon (24.1 – 25.46).

Matthew has accepted that the parousia would be delayed. Since the day of the Lord's coming is unknown, he stresses the necessity of being watchful. In the parable of the talents he spells out what this watchfulness consists in: it consists in carrying out the Lord's instructions to the best of one's God-given ability.

The first two servants are congratulated and rewarded for their enterprise and fidelity. Though their responsibility had been unequal. Their reward is the same. What matters is not accomplishment, but wholehearted commitment. The third servant receives blame and condemnation – because he has done nothing. Instead of blaming himself, the servant blames his master, calling him 'a harsh man'.

In the parable we are dealing with man's response to God's gift. Matthew seems to present God as a stern taskmaster. The parable is meant as a warning to the lazy and inactive disciple to shape up lest he lose everything. The warning is an expression of love and concern.

*It is our custom to spend some time in quiet preparation before the liturgy begins, and save further conversation until we meet socially for refreshments afterwards. The following reflection, based on today's themes, may be found helpful:*

### Reflection

I have not the fine audacity of men  
Who have mastered the pen  
Or the purse.  
The complexes of many slaves are in my verse.  
When I straighten my shoulders to look at the world boldly  
I see talent coldly  
Damning me to stooped attrition.  
Mine was a beggar's mission  
To the dreams I should have been born blind.  
I should have been content to walk behind  
Watching the reflection of God's delight:  
A second-hand teller of the story  
A second-hand glory.  
It was not right that my mind should have echoed life's overtones  
That I should have seen a flower  
Petalled in mighty power.

*Patrick Kavanagh*

# Order of Service

## ¶ The Gathering

§ *At the sound of the bell, **all stand***

## Hymn

§ *The procession enters*

*All*

**Soldiers of Christ, arise,  
And put your armour on,  
Strong in the strength which God supplies  
Through his eternal Son;**

**Strong in the Lord of Hosts,  
And in his mighty power:  
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts  
Is more than conqueror.**

**Stand then in his great might,  
With all his strength endued;  
And take, to arm you for the fight,  
The panoply of God.**

**Leave no unguarded place,  
No weakness of the soul:  
Take every virtue, every grace,  
And fortify the whole.**

**From strength to strength go on,  
Wrestle and fight and pray;  
Tread all the powers of darkness down  
And win the well-fought day.**

**That, having all things done,  
And all your conflicts passed,  
Ye may o'ercome through Christ alone,  
And stand entire at last.**

Words Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Music St Ethelwald  
William Henry Monk (1823-1889)

† In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
*All*      **Amen.**

## The Greeting

Welcome in the name of Christ.  
God's grace, mercy and peace be with you  
*All*      **and also with you.**

*The service is introduced*

## Invitation to Confession

God has given each of us particular talents.  
If used well, these talents will enrich our lives and the lives of others.  
But which of us can say that we have made full use  
    of the gifts God has given us?  
Have we not at times left them unused or misused them?  
Let us turn to the Lord who is generous with his forgiveness.

*Silence for reflection*

## Confession

*All*      **Most merciful God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
we confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly;  
love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you, our God.  
Amen.**

## Kyries

Lord Jesus, you are kind and full of compassion:  
Lord, have mercy.

*All*     **Lord, have mercy.**

You are slow to anger and abounding in love:  
Christ, have mercy.

*All*     **Christ, have mercy.**

You do not treat us according to our sins,  
or repay us according to our faults:  
Lord, have mercy.

*All*     **Lord, have mercy.**

## Absolution

May the God of love and power  
forgive † you and free you from your sins,  
heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,  
and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.

*All*     **Amen.**

## Gloria in Excelsis

*All*     **Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you,  
we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.**

## The Collect

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father,  
whose blessed Son was revealed  
to destroy the works of the devil  
and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life:  
grant that we, having this hope,  
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;  
that when he shall appear in power and great glory  
we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom;  
where he is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

Brothers and sisters in Christ,  
now that we have prepared for this encounter with God  
in the holy scriptures,  
let us be seated to receive into our hearts and minds  
the living word of the Lord as it is proclaimed to us.

§ Sit

# ¶ The Liturgy of the Word

## First Reading

*Reader* A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians.

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Thessalonians 5.1-11

This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm

Response Richard Lloyd  
May the fa - vour of the Lord, the Lord\_ our God be u - pon\_ us.



*Choir* Lord, you have been our refuge  
from one generation to another.  
Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or the earth and the world were formed,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God. **Response**

You turn us back to dust and say:  
'Turn back, O children of earth.'  
For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday,  
which passes like a watch in the night. **Response**

You sweep them away like a dream;  
they fade away suddenly like the grass.  
In the morning it is green and flourishes;  
in the evening it is dried up and withered. **Response**

For we consume away in your displeasure;  
we are afraid at your wrathful indignation.  
You have set our misdeeds before you  
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance. **Response**

Psalm 90.1-8

## Holy Gospel

§ Stand

### Acclamation

1. *Choir only*  
2. *Choir and Congregation*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Choir* Abide in me as I abide in you, says the Lord,  
those who abide in me and I in them bear fruit in plenty.

*All* **Alleluia.**

*All* The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

*All* Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples, 'For it is as if a man, 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."

Matthew 25:14-30

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All

The musical notation is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody begins with a quarter note on C4, followed by quarter notes on D4, E4, F#4, and G4. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is placed above the first note of the second phrase. The second phrase consists of a dotted quarter note on A4, an eighth note on G4, a quarter note on F#4, and a quarter note on E4. The final phrase is a half note on D4, followed by a whole rest. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Praise to you, O Christ.

## The Homily

# The Nicene Creed

§ *Stand*

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*All*      **We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

*All may  
bow*      ***For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and was made man.***

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.**

## Prayers of the Faithful

*Priest* Let us pray that we may use well the talents God has given us,  
so that we may enrich our own lives and the lives of others.

§ *Kneel*

*The response to each petition*

*Intercessor* Giver of all good gifts,  
*All* **hear us and help us to live to your glory.**

*After the final petition*

*Priest* Heavenly Father,  
help us to use well the gifts of grace and nature  
that you have given us,  
so that one day we may merit to hear the words:  
'Well done, good and faithful servant'.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

§ *Stand*

## ¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### Sign of Peace

Grace and peace to you,  
from him who is, and who was, and is to come.

*All* The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer each other a sign of Christ's peace.

# Hymn

*A collection is taken. Please give as you are able.  
Your generosity is much appreciated.*

*The Gifts are presented and the altar is prepared*

All

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,  
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art,  
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night,  
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.**

**Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word  
Be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord,  
Be thou my great Father, and I thy true son,  
Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.**

**Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight,  
Be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might,  
Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower,  
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power.**

**Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,  
Be thou mine inheritance now and always,  
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart,  
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.**

**High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright Sun,  
O grant me its joys after vict'ry is won,  
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.**

Words Irish, c 8th century tr Mary Byrne (1880-1931)  
versified, Eleanor Hull (1860-1935)

Music Slane  
Traditional Irish Melody  
Harmony by Erik Routley (1907-1982)

## Invitation to Prayer

Pray, my brothers and sisters,  
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God,  
the almighty Father.

All

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands  
for the praise and glory of his name,  
for our good, and the good of all his Church.**

## Prayer over the Gifts

O Lord,  
grant that what we offer in the sight of your majesty  
may obtain for us the grace of being devoted to you  
and gain us the prize of everlasting happiness.  
Through Christ our Lord.

*All*     **Amen.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

*All*     The Lord be with you  
**and also with you.**

*All*     Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

*All*     Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

From sunrise to sunset this day is holy,  
for Christ has risen from the tomb  
and scattered the darkness of death with light that will not fade.  
This day the risen Lord walks with your gathered people,  
unfolds for us your word,  
and makes himself known in the breaking of the bread.

And though the night will overtake this day  
you summon us to live in endless light,  
the never-ceasing sabbath of the Lord.

And so, with choirs of angels  
and with all the heavenly host,  
we proclaim your glory  
and join their unending song of praise:

*Choir* Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,  
heaven and earth are full of thy glory.  
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body † and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.  
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:

Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Christ is the mystery of faith:

*All*   
Christ has died: Christ is ris - en: Christ will come a - gain.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice  
made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with Mary, the Virgin Mother of God,  
Saint Matthew and all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

All



A- men.

*The Blessed Sacrament is elevated and bells are rung*

§ *Kneel*

## The Lord's Prayer

God is love, and anyone who lives in love lives in God.  
Let us pray with confidence to the God of love as Jesus taught us;

All

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## Breaking of the Bread

*All* We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.  
**Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

## Agnus Dei

*Choir* O Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
grant us thy peace.

## Invitation to Communion

*All* Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.  
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,  
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**



## Giving of Communion

It is good for me to draw near to God;  
in the Lord God have I made my refuge,  
that I may tell of all your works.

## Spiritual Communion – *for those at home*

### Act of Reception

*All* In union, blessed Jesus,  
with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church  
where your blessed Body and Blood are offered this day,

*(and remembering particularly my own parish ...)*

I long to offer you praise and thanksgiving,  
for creation and all the blessings of this life,  
for the redemption won for us by your life, death, and resurrection,  
for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

*(and particularly for the blessings given me ...)*

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament,  
and, since I cannot at this time receive communion,  
I pray you to come into my heart.

I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart,  
my soul, and my mind.

Let nothing separate me from you;  
let me serve you in this life until, by your grace,  
I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.

# Motet

*Choir*     *Steal away to Jesus.*  
*Steal away home,*  
*I ain't got long to stay here.*

My Lord, he calls me by the thunder.  
The trumpet sounds within my soul,  
I ain't got long to stay here.

Green trees a-bending, poor sinner stands a-trembling.  
The trumpet sounds within my soul,  
I ain't got long to stay here.

*Arranged by John Barnard*

# Hymn

*All*                    **Blessed Jesu, Mary's son,**  
                         **For mankind to earth thou camest,**  
**But the saving battle won,**  
                         **Now at God's right hand thou reignest:**  
**On thy people pour thy blessing,**  
**Gathered here, thy name confessing.**

**By this sacramental sign,**  
                         **Token of thy bitter passion,**  
**Through these gifts of bread and wine**  
                         **Thine own image in us fashion:**  
**By this food thy grace doth send us**  
**From all ills of soul defend us.**

**In this mystery of grace**  
                         **Which we celebrate before thee,**  
**Come, O Saviour, show thy face**  
                         **To the faithful who adore thee:**  
**All our sins by thee forgiven,**  
**Grant us here the joys of heaven.**

*Words* George B. Timms (1910-1997)

*Music* Liebster Jesu (Dessau)

*Melody* Johann Rudolph Ahle (1625-1673)

*Harmony* Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

## Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

§ *Stand*

Gracious Lord,  
in this holy sacrament  
you give substance to our hope:  
bring us at the last  
to that fullness of life for which we long;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

*All* **Amen.**

**We thank you, Lord,  
that you have fed us in this sacrament,  
united us with Christ,  
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet  
prepared for all peoples.  
Amen.**

## Hymn

*All* **Ye that know the Lord is gracious,  
Ye for whom a Corner-stone  
Stands, of God elect and precious,  
Laid that ye may build thereon,  
See that on that sure foundation  
Ye a living temple raise,  
Towers that may tell forth salvation,  
Walls that may re-echo praise.**

**Living stones, by God appointed  
Each to his allotted place,  
Kings and priests, by God anointed,  
Shall ye not declare his grace?  
Ye, a royal generation,  
Tell the tidings of your birth,  
Tidings of a new creation  
To an old and weary earth.**

**Tell the praise of him who called you  
Out of darkness into light,  
Broke the fetters that enthralled you,  
Gave you freedom, peace and sight:  
Tell the tale of sins forgiven,  
Strength renewed and hope restored,  
Till the earth, in tune with heaven,  
Praise and magnify the Lord.**

Words Cyril A Alington (1872-1955)

Music Blaenwern  
William Rowlands (1860-1937)

## Notices for the Community

§ *Sit*

## ¶ Sending Out

§ *Stand*

*All* The Lord be with you.  
**and also with you.**

## Solemn Blessing

*All* May you never forget that all talents are gifts from God.  
**Amen.**

*All* May you use your talents to live an industrious and virtuous life.  
**Amen.**

*All* May the Lord keep you steadfast and without blame until the last day.  
**Amen.**

*All* And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son †, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

## The Dismissal

All            The Mass is ended, go in peace.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## Organ Voluntary

Concert Piece

*Flor Peeters (1903-1986)*

*The procession departs*

*Those leaving immediately are asked to be aware of those who wish to listen to the organ voluntary.*

This evening at 5.30 pm

## Choral Evensong and Benediction

---

## Collection – our response to God’s generosity

*We invite you to make a monetary offering towards the ministry and mission of St Matthew’s Church. You may do so using any of the following methods:*

**Cash, cheques, stewardship envelopes** - *using the receptacle provided at the back of church. If you are a taxpayer please use the envelopes in the chairs, and fill out the details in order that our parish may also benefit from the Gift Aid (an extra 25p for every pound given) associated with your giving.*

**Contactless giving** - *using the terminal provided. Just press the button for the amount you wish to give - £5, £10, or £20, and then hold your bank card over the reader.*

**Giving on your smart phone** - using the QR code printed below. It gives you the option of any amount, Gift Aid, and making a regular payment.

**Giving online** - click the donate button on the parish website or Facebook page and follow the instructions.

Your generosity is gratefully received. Thank you.



*Our thanks are due to Barry D.S.  
who has generously financed  
the production of this week's service booklet.*

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**Please take this booklet home  
as an aid to prayer and reflection during the week,  
and then re-cycle it.**

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