

## Reflection from Fr. Colm on the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Audio posted to the Parish Website on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020*

Good morning everybody, into the second weekend of lockdown now I hope you're okay. Today's Gospel is all about talents and talents we're seeing on a very public level being displayed and being in some manners also being rejected be it a high profile level or less obvious level in the political sphere particularly people of talent for communication. How that talent is used is really what the challenge is of in the Gospel and we are reminded of the talents not so much publicly but privately we're talking about talents that we may have within ourselves, talents that we refuse to acknowledge, or perhaps talents that we don't see in others. The question is being asked to us, what are your talents?

It's a very confused area because as we know and teachers will identify it with particularly parents who invest too much in their children's talents, putting enormous pressure on those children, teachers, some teachers, can perhaps do the opposite and not appreciate the talents that they have before them. We have many, many incidents of that. We have great, great inventors like Sir Thomas Edison who was considered a bit of a scatterbrain at school, Charles Darwin was a daydreamer and lazy, Tolstoy, who was house schooled because he had dropped out of school, all of these are just litanies of individuals perhaps whose talents were not able to be recognised for whatever reason it might be but at a parochial level, a parish level we have talents also whereby people are enormously gifted within the parish but there are others who have talents that perhaps simply drift into the wings and don't get involved because those talents are not appreciated more fully. You might never have thought that you had a talent for leadership until you're pushed into a situation where someone had to take control and very often, we see this in emergencies.

At a collective level, I would say what are the talents of our community and our parish and the wider Church are there groups of people whose talents are not being employed? We don't see very many younger people involved in the church, is this because we have not gone out and invited them?

But talents is a whole area that really we need to perhaps look at a more profound and spiritual level. And for that, I'm just referring now to John O'Donohue, the very well-known writer, author of spiritual books, Anam

Cara, Soul Friend, Eternal Echoes. Donohue wrote with regards to talents

*"God has never created anybody neutral. He let no one come here without a giftedness. You have within you a special gift that no one else has in the same way, the unfolding of your destiny depends on your awakening, identifying, and developing this gift. To awaken this gift is to come into rhythm with the divine pulse of your destiny, to neglect this gift is to dishonour and betray the life of God in you. This gift can only be awakened by love. You are a sacrament an eternal gift given to yourself by God. When you sense this light will begin to flow out to others haunted by the dark and its fears.*

*The Kingdom of Heaven is not like the world. There is no competition in this world of spirit. There, each individuality and each gift is a well of God. However, each gift has its shadow side. To hone your gift, you must learn to love the place where it haunts and disturbs you. A gift is not neutral. Each is a force of life and divine energy. It is not owned by the small fears of the ego. The gifted person in the parable, who ended up in severe condemnation, he buried and smothered his gift because he was afraid.*

*Fear is one of the greatest negative forces. It rips asunder, reduces to nothing that which is real and true. It inflates to monstrous proportions that which is empty and false. It is like a fog. Fear destroys through falsity. Fear faced, looked in the eye, always shrinks. In the awakening of one's talent, to linger on fear is to risk missing the real voyage of one's spirit." Good morning everybody.*