

Gospel Connection - November 15 - 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The parable of the talents: "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

Matthew 25: 14-30

The fable of the birds

There is a legend that after God had created all of the animals of the wood, the newly-made animals walked around, happily discovering what it was like to be alive and getting use to their new bodies — all except the birds.

While the other animals had legs so they could run or fins so that they could swim, the birds could just hop a few steps. They didn't know what to do with these awkward appendages on their shoulder. *Why has God punished us?* they wondered. *Why do we have struggle to get around with these "things" on our backs?*

But then one bird managed to move those "things" on its back and discovered by flapping them up and down the bird could lift itself off the ground higher and higher and higher into the air. Then another bird began to flap its appendages. And then another and another and another. The birds discovered that they could soar into the skies — something no other animal could do.

The birds discovered that what they thought was a "heavy burden" was actually a wonderful gift from God.

Whether we believe it or not, each one of us has been given something unique and special from God that we can use to contribute to the work of creation. Sometimes the very "thing" that we consider to be a burden or disadvantage leads us to discover the particular gift we (or another person) possesses. But, as Jesus teaches in the parable of the talents, such grace demands work on our part, the faith to "flap our wings," and a willingness to place our "wings" at the service of others. Our greatness lies not in the greatness of our talents in themselves but in the greatness of our love to use them to build the Kingdom of God in our time and place.