

2nd Sunday before Advent

Sometimes in life we hear something so good we want to share it. It's simply too good to keep to ourselves. Perhaps we've passed our exams or passed our driving test. I was delighted when I passed my driving test at 20, April 1983! As well as driving lessons, I had also been learning a bit in my dad's Vauxhall Viva with a stick on L Plate. Keen to share my good news I got home and ripped off the L Plate, taking the paint work off with it and leaving a sort of a square where the L Plate had been! Still, it didn't stop me sharing the good news and going for a celebratory drink down the local pub. Other things we might want to share are perhaps getting a new job or getting engaged. I remember when I heard something good many years ago now from the Bishop of Warwick. I was working away in my job on the factory floor. I had an outside call and when I lifted the phone it was the Bishop who told me I had been selected for ordination training.

It was good news for me and it was good news I wanted to share with those who were close to me. When I was a football fan, I couldn't wait to tell people that my team had won. That was definitely good news!

As Christians, we've heard something that is good and that is the good news of Jesus. But quite often you wouldn't think we'd heard that news. Often within the church fellowship the last thing we talk about is the good news of Jesus. We may come together united in word and reception of the Holy Eucharist, but we in varying degrees find it difficult to talk about how exciting our faith is. And if we find it difficult to talk about our exciting faith amongst ourselves, well it's even harder sharing it with others.

But that's what Jesus wants us to do in the best way we can. We're not all preachers or evangelists, or missionaries and some of us might find those words quite scary. Scary thoughts. But God doesn't want us to just sit on the good news we've heard and not share it with others. He wants us to spread it around.

It's very easy to have a passive Christian faith, that's special but fairly personal and private to us and many of us have something of that within us and I include myself. Personal and private is good, a bit like being alone in a lovely place maybe, perhaps in woods, by a lake or on a mountain, or in your own back garden on a sunny day. But it's good to share some of that loveliness with others with others sometimes. Just like our faith.

If we simply sit on the good news and keep our faith to ourselves, then we're like the servant in our parable who was given one talent by his master who is going away on a journey. What does he do with it? He buries it. So what happens when he digs the talent up again? Will it have grown? Will it have multiplied?

No there will still only the one same talent.

The master in our parable of course is Jesus. When he returns do we want Jesus to find us stifled, repressed and secretive about our faith like it's hidden away? Well of course we don't. Surely we want the returning Lord to find us like the servant who was given five talents and the servant who was given two talents. Did they bury their talents like the other? No, they made another five talents and another two talents respectively. In other words, Jesus is trying to say in our parable, they acted on what they were given and made it more.

God wants us to make more of what we're given. The good news we have he wants us to share with others, so that we can help grow God's wonderful kingdom that he has chosen to reveal to us.

When we first receive it from our Lord, we know what we have is special, but we can't see the kingdom so clear. It's a bit like one or two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle and we just have a glimpse of what will be.

But when we share the good news with others, so they also come to believe, then the jigsaw pieces multiply and come together and the picture of God's kingdom is ever clearer.

That's how the Lord wants to find us when he returns.

Amen.