***The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – Year A***

***Sunday, 15th November 2026***

**Making the Most of What God Has Given Us** A sermon based on Matthew 25.14-30

*Readings: Zephaniah 1.7, 12-18: Psalm 90.1-12; 1 Thessalonians 5.1-11; Matthew 25.14-30*

*Reverend Canon Sue-Ellen Chilvers - Parish of Coleambally-Darlington Point*

*May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer. Amen.*

There is something very familiar about the story Jesus tells in our Gospel reading today. A landowner is going away and entrusts his property to three servants. To one he gives five talents, to another two, and to the third one. Each is given responsibility according to their ability.

The first two servants put what they have been given to work and double their master's money. The third, however, digs a hole and buries his talent in the ground. When the master returns, the first two are praised for their faithfulness, while the third is condemned for doing nothing.

At first glance, this might sound like a lesson about money, investment and making a good return. But Jesus is talking about something much bigger than financial success. He is talking about how we use the gifts, opportunities and responsibilities God has entrusted to us.

The word 'talent' in this passage originally refers to a large amount of money, but over time it has also come to mean the gifts and abilities we each possess. And that gives us something to think about.

We sometimes make the mistake of thinking that God has given gifts only to particularly talented people: those who can preach a good sermon, sing

beautifully, lead a parish, or organise a successful event. But God's gifts are much wider than that.

In a rural community, we see those gifts every day. They are found in the person who quietly visits someone who is lonely, the neighbour who helps when things go wrong, the farmer who lends a hand, the person who makes a cup of tea after church, or the volunteer who faithfully keeps things going behind the scenes.

These things may not attract much attention, but they matter enormously in God's kingdom.
Notice that the master does not expect all three servants to produce the same result. He gives them different amounts, according to their abilities. The first two receive exactly the same commendation, even though one makes five talents and the other makes two. The important thing is not how much they were given, but what they did with what they had.

That is an important message for us as a church. We can sometimes look at larger churches, with more people, more money and more resources, and wonder what we can possibly achieve. We may worry about declining numbers, ageing congregations or the challenges of maintaining our buildings.
But God does not ask us to be another church, somewhere else. He asks us to be faithful with what he has entrusted to us, here and now.

The third servant's problem was fear. He was so afraid of getting things wrong that he did nothing at all. And perhaps that is a warning for us. We can become so concerned about protecting what we have that we lose the courage to try something new, welcome someone different or reach out to our community.
Faith is not about burying what God has given us. It is about using it.

As we look to the future of our parish and our community, let us not be discouraged by what we lack. Instead, let us give thanks for what we have and ask how we might use it in God's service.

For the gifts God gives are not meant to be hidden away. They are meant to be shared, developed and put to work for the good of others.

And when the master returns, may we hear those wonderful words: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Amen.