Matt 25:14-30

**ACTIVE VIGILANCE**

The Parable of the Talents (Mt 25:14-30) spurs the Christian community and each of us on to *active* vigilance. This is how the parable is interpreted in the developed countries of the Western world, where Matthew’s teaching on the life that God offers us is understood in economic terms, favouring capitalism.

According to this interpretation, a certain amount of capital has been put into our hands. As Christians, we mustn’t leave it unproductive. So, to be vigilant means to carry out the tasks that God has assigned to us. In the first place, we are to be committed to building up the present world.

A Christian community that cuts itself off from the realities of the present world is not worthy of its Lord. There is no room for fear of compromising ourselves in our contacts with people and with their daily problems.

The community and every one of its members must feel responsible for making the Kingdom of God grow. We must be effective in this regard if we are not to incur the Lord’s condemnation for our failure.

In Matthew’s day, there were those who believed that the Lord would return very soon, so that there was no point in working. He had to condemn their laziness.

Today we risk the opposite. There are those who identify the Kingdom of God with the material construction of the present world and with earthly progress.

But, as the Second Vatican Council pointed out, “Earthly progress must be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ’s kingdom. Nevertheless, such progress, in so far as it can contribute to the better ordering of human society, is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God” (*Constitution of the Church in the Modern World*, n.39).

The struggle for the betterment of people is certainly a concrete and efficacious sign of the coming of God’s kingdom in human history, but it is not the whole story of the Kingdom of God.

The struggle for better living conditions is a sign of another struggle going on at a deeper, spiritual, level: to demolish the barriers in us that prevent us from communicating with the risen Christ.

So, let’s go to work improving the world we live in and serving those who are living in it, for their own sake and for the sake of the risen Lord Jesus who identifies himself with them.