

Generosity

In her first speech our new Prime Minister said “We will do everything we can to help anybody, whatever your background, to go as far as your talents will take you.”

Reading again the Parable of the Talents (Matt25:14-30) I started thinking how Christ calls us to use our talents and ‘treasures on earth’ (Matt6:19) for the benefits of our fellow men. In the words of St Gregory the Great: “He that hath a talent let him see that he hide it not; he that hath abundance, let him quicken himself to mercy and generosity; he that hath art and skill, let him do his best to share the use and the utility thereof with his neighbour.” And those of Thomas Aquinas: “Man should not consider his material possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without hesitation when others are in need.”

As a Christian I believe all humans are created in the image of God and deserve to be treated with equal respect. It is our duty as individuals and nations to use the gifts, with which we have been blessed, to remove the obstacles which prevent others using their talents fully. Let us make the Prime Minister’s promise apply equally beyond our shores. The desire to seek a better life is divinely inspired: to do this many are driven unwillingly to leave their homeland. We must use our talents and treasure to address financial and political insecurity and start making this a choice not a necessity.

This brings me to the prayer which I remember most from school assemblies:

Lord, teach me to be generous.
Teach me to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labour and not to ask for reward,
save that of knowing that I do your will.

Paul Cuss