



St. Matthew's Cathedral eNews

Christ + Compassion + Community

From the Dean

The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away

"So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents."

—Matthew 25:28

We often hear the phrase "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away" read at funerals as a way of helping us to marvel at the mystery of life and death. The verse comes from the book of Job, and it is Job's response to the loss of his health, his wife, his children, and his possessions.

Yet, as I consider the history of St. Matthew's Cathedral and our particular context, I think of the churches that were once here and thriving and are gone. As I look across the street and see the vacant lot where Ross Avenue Baptist Church used to be, and consider the "friendly takeover" of Munger United Methodist Church by Highland Park United Methodist Church, and see the bank where Scofield Memorial Church used to be, and drive around our neighborhood toward downtown and look at the gracious churches that were once bustling and now have few cars, I am motivated to be more faithful, to work harder, to work smarter, and to pray more.

I really do wonder how much of the decline around us is the result of demographics and how much is the result of our not using our talents.

When I hear people say "thus-and-so is the best kept secret in Dallas," I think it is a secret because no one is telling anyone—similar to burying the talent in the parable.

So, our Gospel passage is a call to us to tell our story, to invite others, to give faithfully, to pray fervently, to attend regularly, and to serve willfully, lest the Lord see fit to take the talent that he has given us and to give it to someone else.