

## **GIFTS IN THE FREEZER** (Lc 19, 11-28)

Minas, silver coins, talents... The parable tells us that the person concerned gave some of his goods to ten employees quite confident that on his return he would retrieve them with added benefits.

The day God imagined us... he placed in each human being gifts which made that person unique yet did not distinguish him from his brothers. It was to be the gift that showed what was special about the person; benefits were to be achieved by using the gifts for the service of others.

The very day God continued to think of us... he realised there was one risk that could destroy the gifts he was hoping to give us: that was fear. Still, he trusted that intelligence and freedom would help us see clearly just how we should best use these.

Each era is victim of its own epidemic, and our times were not to be an exception to this. In the future when historians and sociologists make a study of our times they will note the pandemic of our century. They will surely speak of AIDS and of cancer, but – in my humble opinion since I live at the epicentre and lack perspective – they will also be obliged to conclude that fear, much as any affliction, will have been the main obstacle to our positive development and our growth as individuals and as a society. That is quite sad because given the human potential within the gifts we have received, our earth should be a garden of Eden.

What has happened to us? I think we have "frozen" the gifts... Yes, we've frozen them since they are perishable goods that might spoil if not cared for or used for the service of others. We've put them into the freezer so that we won't be found empty-handed when the time comes to account for them to the Giver.

C'mon! Let's acknowledge our own individual and community gifts. We must not be halted by a fear which paralyses and destroys. If you have the gift of healing, then heal! If your gift is to listen, then listen. If you know how to make delicious cakes, invite others to taste them. If you have a talent for sports, play on... but don't go beyond the limits of your body. If prayer is your gift then pray and share your prayer with others. If you have a talent for leadership or for motivating groups (business firms, religious communities, parishes, etc.) then look with love on those persons and go beyond the benefits you can draw from them, reach beyond titles or selfish ends or even productivity. If you are a prophet, be humble, but speak up. And if you are a mystic, then contemplate but don't forget to buy bread... Finally, if you are a daughter or son of God – and that is what you are - don't put your gifts in the freezer.

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Eclesialia 2008.03.07

Spanish title: "DONES CONGELADOS"  
Translation: [www.champagnat.org](http://www.champagnat.org)