

JULY 30 2025 FATHER GUSATVE INEZA

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today we reflect on a pair of short but profound parables that Jesus shares with his disciples in Matthew 13:44–46. These parables unveil the mystery of the kingdom of Heaven and invite us into a new way of seeing our faith—not as a burden to endure, but as a treasure to discover and enjoy.

These parables are part of a longer discourse where Jesus, in the midst of rising conflict and danger, speaks gently but powerfully in stories. Not to obscure the truth, but to draw his listeners into a deeper engagement with it.

Why does Jesus speak in parables? Because the truths of the kingdom are not always grasped by reason or rule, but by the heart awakened to wonder. A parable is not a manual. It is not a commandment or checklist. Rather, it is a door. And those who listen carefully, with open hearts and a searching spirit, walk through that door into the beauty and joy of God's vision for the world.

Let us listen again:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, like a merchant in search of fine pearls."

The message is clear. The kingdom of God is not something imposed, heavy, or burdensome. It is a joy worth everything. It is not about losing, but about gaining.

The one who finds the treasure, the merchant who discovers the pearl—neither of them hesitates. They do not mourn what they sell or sacrifice. They are too captivated by what they have found.

Sometimes we believe that our faith is about struggling, suffering, and then, in the end, being rewarded by eternity in Heaven. But it is more than that—it is a joyful journey.

In the same way, Christian life is not primarily about rules, obligations, or restrictions. It is about joy. It is about living under God’s gracious rule here and now. Jesus tells us, “My yoke is easy, and my burden light.” We find that in Chapter 11 of the same book of Matthew.

When we follow Christ, we are not being deprived—we are being enriched. We are not burdened with holiness—we are liberated by it.

Dear brothers and sisters, this joyful discipleship can find concrete expression in the Church’s teaching. Let us today talk about the Church’s social teaching. Catholic Social Teaching (CST) invites us to shape our world according to the values of justice, peace, solidarity, and dignity for all.

It teaches us that faith is not meant to be hidden away, but lived in the public square—in our workplaces, in our economies, in politics, and in our care for creation.

When the Church calls for the dignity of workers, for the protection of the poor, the immigrants, the earth, and all human life, it is not laying a burden on us. It is pointing us to a treasure in the field. Because living in this way makes life richer, deeper, and more meaningful.

Consider someone who gives their life to the care of the elderly or to the struggle for fair wages and housing. From the outside, it may look like a hard road. But ask anyone who has truly lived these vocations, and they will tell you, “I have found something worth living for.”

In my few years of priestly ministry, I have encountered many people who have shared with me that after dedicating the greater part of their

lives to studies and professional careers, it was only in retirement that they discovered the profound joy and fulfilment that comes from living for the well-being of others.

People—some of whom I may have preached about before—who were great lawyers, teachers, who retire and then dedicate some of their time to the care of the poor. Without gain, without benefit. They find joy in helping others.

So for them, working for the kingdom of God is not a burden, because their life finds meaning. The joy does not lie in comfort, but in communion with God, with others, and with the poor.

The kingdom of Heaven is not a far-off dream, but a reality already breaking into the world through love and justice.

So, dear friends, the treasure is here. The pearl is already among us. Jesus does not call us to misery, but to meaning. Not to endure alone, but to joy.

So let us ask ourselves:

What treasure have I found in my life of faith?

Am I just struggling to get by and then be rewarded in Heaven?

What pearl am I still searching for?

What am I willing to give up to live more fully in the light of God's kingdom?

It is not a mystery. Christ has shown us that following Him is not misery—it has meaning. It has a purpose. Living for others.

Even when Christ was giving His life, there was a meaning behind it. The struggles that we go through are not an end in themselves. When we live them in communion, when we share the sufferings of a community, our suffering has meaning.

So let us not fear the cost, for what we gain is much more than what we leave behind. As St. Paul writes,
"I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord."

May we walk as those who have found treasure. May we live our faith not as a duty, but as a delight.

Most of us have been taught that we struggle, and then we are rewarded—just like we do in our school time. We compete, we struggle, and in the end we are rewarded.

So may... dear brothers and sisters, may our lives reflect the joy of the kingdom. A Christian who is not joyful has missed something in his or her life.

May we live our lives reflecting that joy of the kingdom—hidden in the field, shining like a pearl, and ready to be shared with the world.

Amen.