

## Gospel Reflection

The Gospel of Matthew continues with parables that hint at what the reign of God might be like. The first parable doesn't tell us what the man was doing digging in a field that was not his, but it doesn't matter. He stumbles upon a great treasure, and recognizing its value, gives up everything he has for it. The same is true of the pearl merchant. Pearls were very rare and expensive up until the twentieth century. They are found in oysters, deep in salt or fresh water, and divers, then without any air tanks, had to dive for them and collect many thousands of oysters to find good pearls. Enough beautiful, matched pearls for a necklace were a rare and expensive find. A single rare, large pearl was a king's ransom!

The image of the dragnet is a good one for our unconscious mind. Hidden there is everything we experience, good and bad, that influences us in our lives. Hidden there also is the Holy Spirit, at work sorting the good from the bad, the treasure from the dross, and freeing us to begin to know our deepest desires for God. Great saints like John of the Cross and Teresa of Ávila, both doctors of the Church, wrote about our deepest selves being the dwelling place of God. To have this revealed to us is a great gift, a priceless treasure. Because the Holy Spirit is at work in us, purifying and drawing us closer, it does not mean we do nothing. We are given free will to seek God and to pay attention to these inner workings, as God strips away whatever impedes us. This is not always comfortable. When we willingly allow God to work in us, being attentive to what the Spirit is doing, we will find God. The treasure and the pearl are real. One was found by accident, the other by much searching. It does not matter which one we use. If we are attentive, we will find God, for God waits to be found!

## KEEPING FAITH FIRST FAMILY FUN

*Matthew 13:44-52*

S M X S C C P T M S M S D  
 T I E A U E S O P E O E L  
 U Y G R A O O D L A Z P O  
 E E A R C R E D F M B E H  
 B N L X E H L T H L E R E  
 I S N R R E A D H T T A S  
 R G O E I S B N E G X T U  
 C T A F T A R O T K I E O  
 S T R E A S U R E P C R H  
 Z D S S L E G N A C B I K  
 N W Z B R F F I S H T L W  
 N B M A W B V G T A F I T  
 K C Q F F K Y Z Z G I G D

**Find these words from the Gospel passage.**

AGE	ANGELS	FIELD
FISH	HOUSEHOLD	MERCHANT
NET	PEARLS	RIGHTEOUS
SCRIBE	SEA	SEPERATE
STOREROOM	TREASURE	WICKED

## Disciple's Reflection & Questions of the Week

*Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
7/27/2008*

*Matthew 13:44-52  
Faith-Sharing  
Questions of the Week*



***Our Lady of the Assumption***

435 Berkeley Ave.  
Claremont, CA  
[www.olaclaremont.org](http://www.olaclaremont.org)

## Call to Prayer

*We begin by calling upon God:*

**In the Name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the  
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

*We then pause for a moment to listen with  
our hearts to this week's Gospel passage...*

**The Word of God:** *Matthew 13:44-52*

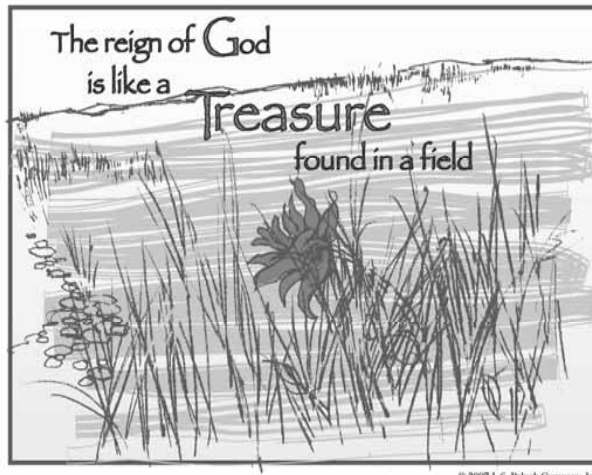
### ***The Gospel according to Matthew***

Jesus said to his disciples: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus will it be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."

***The Gospel of the Lord***



### **Gospel Glossary**

**Treasure Buried in a Field:** During Jesus' time, it would not have been unusual to secure valuables by hiding them in the ground.

**The end of the age:** Traditionally taken to refer to the day of judgment.

**Scribe:** This likely refers to the apostles and their later counterparts who are called upon to bring both the new teachings of Christ and the old teachings of the Hebrew scriptures to the people.



A stained-glass depiction of the Parable of the Pearl at the historic Cathedral Church of Saint Matthew in Dallas.

## Faith Sharing

### **Questions of the Week**

- What are some ways that I have encountered the kingdom of heaven – by chance, search, or discernment?
- What is the kingdom of heaven like for me?
- What are "the new and the old" that are a part of my personal storehouse of God's treasures?

## Closing Prayer

God our Father and Protector,  
Without you nothing is holy, nothing has value. Guide us to everlasting life by helping us to use wisely the blessing you have given to the world. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Amen

**Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**