

For years I've admired a drunkard, Matt Talbot. He was born and raised in Ireland. As a young man he began to frequent the pubs of Dublin. He soon became a full-blown drunk like his father. He was quite generous, buying drinks for his friends. Then, one day he lost his job. He had no money.

He continued to go down to the pub expecting his so-called friends would buy him some drinks in repayment for his generosity. But he was mistaken, no one paid him back. He was deeply hurt. They were no longer his friends. This experience put him on the path to sobriety and prayer. He began to haunt the Churches of Dublin just as he had haunted the pubs. He also became a great one to help others.

Many of us are now more than halfway in our lives. Today's Gospel provides us with a good opportunity to ask ourselves, "How am I doing?" Am I like the steward in today's Gospel, a deceiver, living out of selfishness and fear? Or am I living my life out of love and generosity?

Today's Gospel offers us the opportunity to pause and reflect on the patterns of our own choices in life. Notice: when the steward was discovered he shifted his tactics but remained dishonest. His dishonest pattern continued.

Jesus' invitation to us in this Gospel is to be aware of the dishonest, self-serving patterns in our life, the patterns that injure us and those with whom we live. And then to have the courage to accept this reality with the help of God. And finally the decision to change. Matt Talbot offers us a good example.

This is the real cleverness Jesus is talking about. It requires courage and trust and surrender to the will of God.

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Matt Talbot had a deep love and reverence for the Eucharist.

Venerable Matt Talbot pray for us!