

*Memorial of St. Ignatius of Loyola, Priest
St. Thomas the Apostle Church – West Springfield, Massachusetts
July 31, 2019*

Scripture Readings: Exodus 34:29-35 ✕ Psalm 99:507, 9 ✕ Matthew 13:31-35

In both of today's very brief parables, people find something of tremendous value: one finds a treasure and the other finds a pearl of great price. The way that each of these discoveries is made is quite different from the other. One finds treasure in a random sort of way; he wasn't really looking for it but, instead, was working for a wage, digging in someone else's field, and the last thing he expected to find there was buried treasure. In the other parable, the merchant was actively searching for fine pearls and, eventually, as a result of his persistence, found one pearl of great price that stood out from all the rest.



Both parables are meant to be metaphors for the kingdom of God. Both suggest that our relationship with God is greater than any earthly treasure.

The first parable suggests to us that this treasure comes to us as a grace. We can be surprised by God's gracious initiative toward us, hidden just beneath the surface of our awareness. Grace can break through to us when we are least expecting it.

The second parable highlights the importance of our actively searching in coming to know God. The person who seeks will find; to the person who knocks, the door will be opened.¹ We can be — and will be — surprised by grace, but also, we are called to seek Him and to love Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind.² ✕

¹ Matthew 7:7

² Matthew 22:37