

Eighteenth Sunday of Ordinary time

Ecc. 1.2; 2-21-23, Col. 3.1-5, 9-11, Lk. 12.13-21

All three of today's readings point us towards the kingdom of God as opposed to the materialism of the earth. Some believe the Book of Ecclesiastes may have been written by King Solomon. The first words today were "vanity of vanities, says Qoheleth, vanity of vanities! All things are vanity!" The word Qoheleth is a Hebrew word meaning teacher. I had a professor who was a Hebrew linguistic and explained that a very rough translation of this phraseology would be to say. Life is stupid, really, really stupid. If written by Solomon, he would have been in his old age, he would have had many earthly riches. The author continues on with his complaints and the Book concludes with "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecc. 12.13).

In today's Gospel Jesus is asked, to "tell my brother to share the inheritance with me." Several things stand out here, in order to receive an inheritance, one must be an heir. The heir has a special relationship with the person they are inheriting from, such as a son or daughter for example. The heir then has an expectation to obtain something of value. Note there is no mention of who died or the relationship to the questioner.

We know Jesus can judge the matter, but the lesson needed is even bigger. Jesus uses a parable to explain the deeper meaning. The rich man's bountiful harvest. The man's focus is on the material aspect of his success, his eyes and heart are focused on the earthly accomplishments and desires, he becomes greedy. The rich man does **not** turn his attention nor any thanksgiving to God nor heavenly things.

A life centered on greed, ambition, and self-satisfaction is lacking of meaning. My friends the mortality rate of the human being remains at 100%. As the old saying goes, "you can't take it with you." Recall in the parable what God said to the rich man (in verse 20), "You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong? Thus will it be for all who store up treasure for **themselves** but are **not rich** in what matters to **God**."

Note Jesus does not say don't become wealthy, rather what He is saying is **ALL** things come from God, belong to God and return to God, including us! Jesus, through this parable calls us to recognize God in our lives even in the very little

moments, like when someone does something unexpected for you and to say thank you. This is something we teach children to say at a very young age. We must not only acknowledge God as creator but let us **Thank God! Thank God** for all we have and receive.

In our world materialism seems to be pushing faith out of our hearts and away from our time, our time with God. God in His infinite wisdom gives us virtues to help combat our challenges. St Paul says “If you were raised with Christ, see what is above” and “think of what is above, not what is here on earth.” Paul is reminding us that through our Baptism we had died and risen with Christ.

Through our Baptism we become children of God and thus we become heirs. Our inheritance is the Kingdom of God. Through our Baptism we receive the Theological virtues of Faith, Hope and Love or Charity. At our Baptism we are given the tools necessary to have that strong relationship with God. We are called “to fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecc.12.13)

We are called to acknowledge God’s hand in everything we have and in what we do. Our daily virtues in which we need are referenced in the CCC 2407 tells us we need to have the virtue of *temperance*, “so as to moderate attachment to this world’s goods; the practice of the virtue of *justice*, to preserve our neighbors rights and render him what is due, and the practice of *solidarity*, in accordance with the golden rule and in keeping with the generosity of the Lord.” My friends without God the creator what really would anyone us have.

My dear friends let us every morning, as soon as our feet hit the ground, make the sign of the cross and thank God for the day and all the blessings He has bestowed upon us! Our ultimate goal is to get to heaven to which we cannot do on our own. Through the use of virtues may we realize that the creator is with us in every step of our life. Let us turn our hearts to the treasures of heaven not of earth!