

Saturday of the Thirty-first Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 16:9-15): Jesus said to his disciples: “I tell you, make friends for yourselves with dishonest wealth, so that when it fails, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones; and the person who is dishonest in very small matters is also dishonest in great ones. If, therefore, you are not trustworthy with dishonest wealth, who will trust you with true wealth? If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to another, who will give you what is yours? No servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all these things and sneered at him. And he said to them, “You justify yourselves in the sight of others, but God knows your hearts; for what is of human esteem is an abomination in the sight of God.”

“The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones”

Fr. Joaquim FORTUNY i Vizcarro
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Today, Jesus speaks again with authority: He uses the «so I tell you», that has a particular force, as if dealing with a new doctrine. God wants everyone to be saved and to come to keep knowledge of the truth (cf. 1Tim 2:4); God wants us to be saints and today He points out necessary traits which will help us to reach holiness and have the “true goods”: faithfulness to small things, authenticity and never to forget God knows our hearts.

Faithfulness in small things falls within our reach. Our days are usually formed by what we call “very normal things”: the same job, the same people, some pious practices, our family... And it is in these ordinary realities where we must fulfill ourselves as persons and grow in holiness. “The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones; and the person who is dishonest in very small matters is also dishonest in great ones” (Lk 16:10). We must do all things well, with upright intention and a sincere desire to please God, our Father; when we do it for love, it has a greater value and prepares us for the ‘true goods’. How well did Saint Josemaria Escrivá express it!: “Have you seen how that imposing building was built? One brick upon another. Thousands. But, one by one. And bags of cement, one by one. And blocks of stone, each of them insignificant compared with the massive whole. And beams of steel. And men working, the same hours, day after day... Have you seen how that imposing building was built? ... By dint of little things!”

It can help us to have the right intention to carefully make, every evening, our examination of conscience without ever forgetting that God sees everything, even the most hidden thoughts, just as we learned in our catechism, and that the important thing is to always please our Father God, whom we have to serve with love, bearing well in mind that “no servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other” (Lk 16:13). Don't ever forget: “Only God is God” (Benedict XVI).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

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"Pay much attention to small things" (Saint Pedro Poveda)

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"Like any technical instrument, money does not have a neutral value, but acquires value based on the aims and circumstances in which it is used." (Francis)

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"A theory that makes profit the exclusive norm and ultimate end of economic activity is morally unacceptable. The disordered desire for money cannot but produce perverse effects. It is one of the causes of the many conflicts which disturb the social order. A system that "subordinates the basic rights of individuals and of groups to the collective organization of production" is contrary to human dignity. Every practice that reduces persons to nothing more than a means of profit enslaves man, leads to idolizing money, and contributes to the spread of atheism. "You cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk 16,13)." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n 2424)