

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (Lk 12:13-21): ... Jesus said to the crowd, “Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions.”

Then he told them a parable. “There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest. He asked himself, ‘...I shall say to myself, “Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!”’ But God said to him, ‘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.

The conviction that man is self-sufficient has led him to confuse happiness with immanent forms of material prosperity

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, sometimes modern man is wrongly convinced that he is the sole author of himself, his life and society. This is a presumption that follows from being selfishly closed in upon himself, and it is a consequence of original sin. The conviction that man is self-sufficient has led him to confuse happiness and salvation with immanent forms of material prosperity and social action.

Economic, social and political development, if it is to be authentically human, needs to make room for the principle of gratuitousness as an expression of fraternity. Economy and finance, as instruments, can be used badly when those at the helm are motivated by purely selfish ends. The Church's social doctrine holds that authentically human social relationships of friendship, solidarity and reciprocity can also be conducted within economic activity, and not only outside it or “after” it.

—Economic life must be understood as a multi-layered phenomenon: in every one of these layers, to varying degrees and in ways specifically suited to each, the aspect of fraternal reciprocity must be present.