

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Gospel text (Lk 12:13-21): Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me.” He replied to him, “Friend, who appointed me as your judge and arbitrator?” Then he 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, ‘What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest?’ And he said, ‘This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods and 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.

“Though one may be rich, one’s life does not consist of possessions”

**Fr. Jordi PASCUAL i Bancells
(Salt, Girona, Spain)**

Today, Jesus confronts us with what is fundamental in our Christian life, in our relationship with God: to get rich before him. That is, to fill our own hands and heart with all kinds of supernatural and spiritual goods of grace, and not of material possessions.

This is why, in the light of today's Gospel we can wonder: what do we fill our heart with? The man of the parable saw it quite clearly: “rest, eat, drink, be merry!” (Lk 12:19). But this is absolutely not what God expects from his good sons. The Lord does not want our happiness to rely upon legacies, banquets, latest model cars, exotic holidays, estates, our armchair, beers or money. All these things may be good, but they cannot satisfy per se our yearning for the plenitude of our souls, and, consequently, we should employ them only as the means they simply are.

This is the experience of St. Ignatius Loyola's, whose celebration was yesterday. This is how he admitted it in his own auto-biography: “When he thought of worldly things, he delighted in them, but when he gave them up, dead bored, he felt sad and empty; when he thought, instead, of the penances he observed in the just men, he felt solace and comfort, not only in that very moment, but even afterwards, he felt contented and cheerful.” And this can also be our own experience.

Because material and earthly things become outdated and expire; but, spiritual things are eternal, they last forever and are the only ones that can fill our heart and give a meaning to our human and Christian life.

Jesus said it very clear: “You fool” (Lk 12:20), this is how He qualifies those who only have material, earthly and selfish aims. Let us beg we may always present ourselves before God, at any time, with our hands and heart full of our efforts to seek our Lord and to look for what is pleasing to him, for this is the only thing that will take us to Heaven.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

-

“Man has a beautiful duty and obligation: to pray and to love. If you pray and love, you will have found happiness in this world.” (St. John Mary Vianney)

-

“You are important! God counts on you for what you are, not for what you possess. In his eyes

the clothes you wear or the kind of cell phone you use are of absolutely no concern. He doesn't care whether you are stylish or not; he cares about you! In his eyes, you are precious, and your value is inestimable." (Francis)

-

"The tenth commandment forbids greed and the desire to amass earthly goods without limit. It forbids avarice arising from a passion for riches and their attendant power (...)" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2,536)