Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (*Mk* 10:17-30): As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother." He replied and said to him, "Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth." Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, "You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" The disciples were amazed at his words. So Jesus again said to them in reply, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God." Peter began to say to him, "We have given up everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come."

"He went away sad, for he had many possessions"

Fr. Xavier SERRA i Permanyer
(Sabadell, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, we see how Jesus — who loves us — wants everyone to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Hence, this severe warning to the "rich." They too are called to enter the Kingdom, but their situation makes it more

challenging to open up to God. Wealth can lead them to believe they have everything; they may be tempted to place their security and trust in their own resources and riches, without realizing that trust and security must be placed in God. But not just in words: it’s easy to say, "Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust in You," but it’s much harder to live it out. If we are wealthy, when we say this prayer sincerely, we should strive to use our riches for the good of others and see ourselves as stewards of the blessings God has given us.

I often travel on mission trips, and there, amidst the poverty and lack of human security, people realize that life hangs by a thread, and their existence is fragile. This situation makes it easier for them to see that God gives them their foundation, that their lives are in His hands. On the other hand, here — in our consumerist world — we have so much that we might fall into the temptation of believing that these things grant us security, that we are held up by a strong rope. But in reality — just like the "poor" — we are hanging by a thread. Mother Teresa of Calcutta said: "Even God cannot fill what is full already. We must empty ourselves so that God can fill us." There is a danger of having God as just one more element in our lives, one more book on the shelf —important, yes, but just another book. And thus, we fail to truly consider Him as our Savior.

But whether rich or poor, no one can save themselves: "Then who can be saved?" (Mk 10:26), the disciples exclaim. "For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God." (Mk 10:27), Jesus replies. Let us all fully trust in Jesus, and may this trust be reflected in our lives.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Poverty accompanied Christ on the cross: it was buried with Christ, it was resurrected with Christ, it ascended with Christ to heaven. Souls who fall in love with poverty receive, even in this life, the lightness to fly to heaven” (Saint Francis of Assisi)

- “The young man did not allow himself to be conquered by Jesus’ loving gaze, and thus was not able to change. Only by accepting with humble gratitude the love of the Lord do we free ourselves from the seduction of idols: they promise life but procure death” (Francis)

- “... In the three synoptic Gospels, Jesus' call to the rich young man to follow him, in the obedience of a disciple and in the observance of the Commandments, is joined to the call to poverty and chastity. The evangelical counsels are inseparable from the Commandments" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2053)