

Monday 29th in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 12,13-21): Someone in the crowd spoke to Jesus, «Master, tell my brother to share with me the family inheritance». He replied, «My friend, who has appointed me as your judge or your attorney?». Then Jesus said to the people, «Be on your guard and avoid every kind of greed, for even though you have many possessions, it is not that which gives you life».

And Jesus continued with this story, «There was a rich man and his land had produced a good harvest. He thought: ‘What shall I do? For I am short of room to store my harvest. So this is what he planned: I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones to store all this grain, which is my wealth. Then I may say to myself: My friend, you have a lot of good things put by for many years. Rest, eat, drink and enjoy yourself’. But God said to him: ‘You fool! This very night your life will be taken from you; tell me who shall get all you have put aside?’. This is the lot of the one who stores up riches instead of amassing for God».

«Even though you have many possessions, it is not that which gives you life»

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Today, if we do not close our eyes and our ears, the Gospel will strike us through its clarity and directness: «Be on your guard and avoid every kind of greed, for even though you have many possessions, it is not that which gives you life» (Lk 12:15). Where does man's life come from?

We know quite well where Jesus' life comes from, because He, himself, has told us: «For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself» (Jn 5:26). We all know that Jesus' life does not come only from

the Father, but it also consists in abiding by his will, as the Father's will is the nourishment for Jesus, and it amounts to carry out His work of salvation among men, by offering his life for his friends, which is the greatest sign of love. Jesus' life is, therefore, a life totally received from the Father and totally handed over to the same Father and, through the love to the Father, to all men. How can human life, therefore, be sufficient per se? How can it be denied that our life is a gift we have received and, because of that, if nothing else, we have to be grateful for it? «Nobody can claim to be the master of his own life» (St. Jerome).

Following this same logic, the missing question could only be: how can our life have any meaning at all if it is a life turned in upon itself, and is satisfied by saying: «My friend, you have a lot of good things put by for many years. Rest, eat, drink and enjoy yourself» (Lk 12:19)? If Jesus' life is a gift received and a gift always given with love, our own life —that we cannot deny we have also received— ought to become, following Jesus' life, a total gift to God and to our brothers, because «Whoever loves his life loses it» (Jn 12:25).