



Eighteenth Sunday Ordinary Time.

Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23 Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11 Luke 12:13-21

Today's Gospel is very topical. Jesus is speaking about discipleship and some fellow in the crowd interrupts to call out, "Teacher, tell my brother to give me my share of our property."

Jesus is surprised and retorts, "When did I become a magistrate?"

Jesus turns to the group and says, "Avoid greed in any of its forms. You can be wealthy but that is no guarantee that it will give you a good life."

Don't we all secretly believe that if we won Lotto our lives would be transformed? We could, but there's no guarantee of happiness.

Jesus went on to tell a story. "There was once a rich farmer... The people probably grinned and said, "Not around here."

This fellow had such a good year that he ran out of storage space. He thought, "I'll expand, I'll build new barns, bigger silos, it'll be an investment. I might even be able to retire." He began to daydream about all the good things he would be able to afford.

He heard God's voice saying, "You fool, what happens if you die tonight?"

This is what can happen if you spend our lives fixed on tomorrow.

A more important question is, "What are you doing today?" One morning you may wake up and find you are old and you are still planning to live tomorrow.

In one of the Wisdom books the author reflects on Vanity. This is not thinking that you look good but rather that you are exempt from the ordinary vicissitudes of life. The "It won't happen to me," myth.

The writer tells us that we need balance in our lives. Moderation is the key not excess. Too much work and we haven't time for family and friends. Too much idleness leaves us dissatisfied and empty. The difference between a slave and a free person is not the amount of work each does but whether they have choices. A free person can decide what to do with the time they have.

The changes in our society of recent times seem to point to people having less control of their lives and fewer choices. Employment decisions may not be based on justice for all. The dollar is not the bottom line even if that's what we are always being told.

We are the bottom line. We are also the top line. If our society is tempted to put things like profits before people then our society needs transforming.

The Gospel tells us that Jesus valued people, ordinary people, sick people, mentally ill people, prisoners, everybody, particularly those society or religion cast aside.

He also valued people with resources of time and money because they were free to help other people. His ministry was supported by women who had the means to take care of the practical business of day-to-living.

In the letter to the community at Colossae, Paul had this to say, Greed and the focus on self, and the promotion of self, is out. As the baptised we are dead to all that.

Look around, there are no Greeks here, or Jews (or any other race) there are only other Christs, that is, only the beloved of God with whom Christ identifies himself.

Live life to the full! This is God's gift to us.

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