

The Living Word

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

10 October 2021

First Reading Wis 7:7-11

In comparison to wisdom, I held riches as nothing.

I prayed, and understanding was given me;
I entreated, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me.

I esteemed her more than sceptres and thrones;

compared with her, I held riches as nothing.

I reckoned no priceless stone to be her peer,

for compared with her, all gold is a pinch of sand,

and beside her silver ranks as mud.

I loved her more than health or beauty,

preferred her to the light,

since her radiance never sleeps.

In her company all good things came to me,
at her hands riches not to be numbered.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 89:12-17. R. v.14

*(R.) Fill us with your love, O Lord,
and we will sing for joy!*

1. Make us know the shortness of our life that we may gain wisdom of heart. Lord, relent! Is your anger forever? Show pity to your servants. *(R.)*
2. In the morning, fill us with your love; we shall exult and rejoice all our days. Give us joy to balance our affliction for the years when we knew misfortune. *(R.)*
3. Show forth your work to your servants; let your glory shine on their children. Let the favour of the Lord be upon us: give success to the work of our hands. *(R.)*

Second Reading Heb 4:12-13

The word of God discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

The word of God is something alive and active; it cuts like any double-edged sword but more finely: it can slip through the place where the soul is divided from the spirit, or joints from the marrow; it can judge the secret emotions and thoughts. No created thing can hide from him; everything is uncovered and open to the eyes of the one to whom we must give account of ourselves.

Gospel Acclamation Mt 5:3

Alleluia, alleluia!

Happy the poor in spirit;

the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

Alleluia!

Gospel Mk 10:17-30

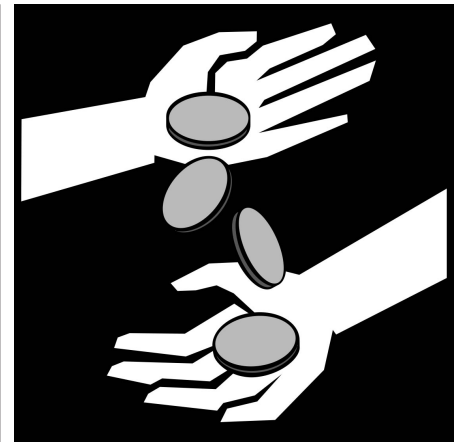
or (shorter form Mk 10:17-27)

Go and sell whatever you have and come follow me.

Jesus was setting out on a journey when a man ran up, knelt before him and put this question to him, 'Good master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You must not kill; You must not commit adultery; You must not steal; You must not bring false witness; You must not defraud; Honour your father and mother.' And he said to him, 'Master, I have kept all these from my earliest days.' Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and he said, 'There is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' But his face fell at these words and he went away sad, for he was a man of great wealth.

Jesus looked round and said to his disciples, 'How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!' The disciples were astounded by these words, but Jesus insisted, 'My children,' he said to them, '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 a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.' They were more astonished than ever. 'In that case' they said to one another, 'who can be saved?' Jesus gazed at them. 'For men' he said, 'it is impossible, but not for God: because everything is possible for God.'

Peter took this up. 'What about us?' he asked him. 'We have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and land – not without persecutions – now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life.'



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

The man in this story is described (at the end) as a man of great wealth, so that when Jesus says 'There is one thing you lack', it would have got his attention. But he learnt to his shock that what he lacked was the big-heartedness which would enable him to give up the security and status and power which came with his possessions.

Jesus was not satisfied with the wealthy man's minimalist agenda of keeping the commandments. He is just as dissatisfied with us. We each know what is holding us back from being a wholehearted follower of Jesus Christ. At some stage in our lives, we have known, or know now, or will know, what it is we are hanging onto: the one thing we cannot, will not, give up, the one thing that is so much part of our personality we cannot imagine what it would be like to get rid of it.

There is only one thing that can give you, give me, the courage and trust that is needed. In this Gospel story, and the only time in Mark, it says: 'Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him.' This is not the glare of the critical eye but similar to the gaze of a parent on a newborn child, envisaging and encouraging a beautiful future for that child.

We could take a moment to pray, 'Lord, I know there is something I must give up to enable me to follow you more nearly. Give me the courage which can only come from knowing that you gaze steadily at me and love me.'

mtate@bigpond.com

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