

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 5, 2007

Read:
Ecc 10: 20-23
Is 60: 1-6, 12-14, 17
Col 3: 15, 9-11
Luke 12: 19-21

Reflect:

The problem with greed is that it hurts others. The problem with the materialism that makes us greedy is self-reliance. When we rely on ourselves and our own resources instead of trusting God, we are self-centered, and others suffer. When we protect our lives by storing up our goods behind the walls of bars that we build, others are closed out. In Luke 12:13-21, Jesus addresses both greed and self-reliance, because they are completely contrary to the personality of God.



God is the source of the beautiful talents we get. Whatever you have in abundance (money, or joy, or wisdom, or lessons learned from experience, etc.), it came through the talents, abilities, and personality style that God has given to you.

Whatever you've received through your own efforts is originally from God's efforts. The ability to work comes from God. God is the source of everything good in our lives, and it's all time and to be shared, because this is how God answers people's prayers. We receive so that we can be God's hands giving to others what he wants to give them generously.

Generosity grows when we understand that God is the provider of everything good and that he will continue to provide for us even when we give away what he gives to us—especially when we give away what he gives to us.

A person who understands God's generosity is truly wealthy. Our lives are rich in peace even amidst trials and battles, rich in joy even during hardships, and rich in confidence even when things look disastrous.

Everything that belongs to God is ours when we desire to share it with others. This is the primary economic principle of the Kingdom of God. The Body of Christ turns only when there's a continual exchange of goods. We call this the communion of saints.

Questions for Personal Reflection:

† What is most difficult for you to share or give away? Why do you cling to it? What are you afraid will happen if you let go of it? Remind yourself that God gave it to you and will give you more if you need it.

† Take one thing you already share with others and increase the sharing. Notice that you already have entered into God's generosity!

Questions for Faith Sharing:

† Why do we feel safer relying on ourselves than on God? Give an example of self-reliance.

† How does this block God's generosity?

Your group's meeting schedule or contact person or a prayer goes into this box. Personalize this as a way to be welcoming and invite new people to join.

Reflections for the Sundays of August

...things" that the master's servants get / wait for that? Now is the time to ferociously the Kingdom of God and build our cackle of gifts that no thief can rob nor moth destroy.



Questions for Personal Reflection:

...you knew you were going to die tomorrow, what would you do today to prepare? What attitudes, what goals, and what plans do you have that don't assist Kingdom of God? What habits or addictions? Unloving behaviors? Unfinished and unresolved conflicts? Take the worthless treasures to the Sacrament of Reconciliation to clean them out of our life, with Christ's help, so that you make room for heavenly treasures.

Questions for Faith Sharing:

Describe an earthly attachment you'd like to have and explain how God led you let go of it. What divine treasure did you gain?

Your group's meeting schedule or contact person or a prayer goes into this box. Personalize this as a way to be welcoming and invite new people to join.

Reflections for the Sundays of August

...gestures that might make a difference in someone else's ability to receive eternal peace.

Jesus noted that this fire divides households. It divides us from anyone who remains self-centered & unwilling to make sacrifices that will lead to peace. Nevertheless, we must continue to give them love. This leads up the fire within us, which purifies us further. And gradually, the world changes.

Questions for Personal Reflection:

† Who has "burnt" you? What pain has been inflicted on you by others? See this as happening to Jesus, too. Instead of retaliating to try to stop the pain, choose a sacrifice that you're willing to make for them. And remember, don't expect them to appreciate it; only Jesus will appreciate it completely. How does his appreciation of your sacrifices make you feel?

Questions for Faith Sharing:

† How is it possible to experience peace after making a sacrifice for someone who is unloving toward you?

† Give ordinary examples of every-day sacrifices that you have made. How does the Holy Spirit bring God's Kingdom to earth through this?

Your group's meeting schedule or contact person or a prayer goes into this box. Personalize this as a way to be welcoming and invite new people to join.

Order
Breaking Open the Word of Faith
one month of Sunday Reflections at a time
or by annual subscription
from Catholic Digital Resources:
www.catholicdr.com

Reflections for the Sundays of August

The reading from Hebrews tells us not to disdain the discipline of the Lord. He uses our hardships and trials to perfect us in love. If we use these opportunities to grow in love—if we seek God in them and let him stretch our ability to love—we become more like Jesus. We make the path toward heaven straight, and what is lame and disjoined in our spirituality is healed.

Questions for Personal Reflection:

† Who in your life is difficult to love? (Don't forget to consider any unloving behaviors you have toward yourself.)

† How might God be using these hard-to-love people to strengthen your ability to love more perfectly?

Questions for Faith Sharing:

† People who are hard to love are salt-makers, because they give us plenty of opportunities to identify and overcome (with God's help of course) our imperfect ability to love. What happens if we give God permission to change us when we wish someone else would change?

† How is this a key to heaven?

Your group's meeting schedule or contact person or a prayer goes into this box. Personalize this as a way to be welcoming and invite new people to join.

...interior that we are not happy unless we pouring our hearts and souls into works and prayers and

...others.