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Sunday : 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Gospel:

Matthew: 13:44-52

Jesus said to his disciples, “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

Gospel Reflection

Hellow, Treasure !

How do we recognise the Kingdom of God? Has it an anthem like a country, a flag like a nation, or a language of its own?

The Kingdom of God is not so much a place as God's living presence with us. It is found at the heart of daily living, like a treasure in the field of life.

In God's Kingdom there is no flag, anthem or language separate from the flag, anthem and language of our experience of life - the flag, anthem and language of love, compassion, and works of justice and mercy.

What is important to us is not 'things', material things, however valuable they are. God's Kingdom is about people. They are the real treasures of life, and we are surrounded by them every day. So this week, why not look at people (though don't stare!), and say in your heart - "Hello, Treasure !"

Notices

We remember in our prayers Helen Evans and Catriona Benzie whose Funerals take place this week. We remember them and their families, and all those whose anniversaries are at this time. May they rest in God's peace.

Reflections for this week

Monday (Anthony de Mello, SJ)

The sannyasi had reached the outskirts of the village and settled down under a tree for the night when a villager came up to him and said "Last night the Lord Shiva appeared to me in a dream and told me that if I came here at dusk I would find a sannyasi who would give me a precious stone that would make me rich forever. Give me the precious stone!" The sannyasi rummaged in his bag and pulled out a huge diamond. "He probably meant this one" he said "I found it in the forest. You can certainly have it." The villager took the diamond and walked joyfully away. All that night he was unable to sleep. Next day at the crack of dawn he woke the sannyasi and said "Give me the wealth that makes it possible for you to give this diamond away so easily."

Scripture (Proverbs 3: 13,15-17)

Blessed are those who have discovered wisdom, those who have acquired understanding! Gaining her is more rewarding than silver, her yield is more valuable than gold. She is beyond the price of pearls, nothing you could covet is her equal. Her ways are filled with delight, her paths all lead to contentment.

Tuesday (William Law)

As a good Christian should consider every place as holy because God is there, so should they look upon every part of life as a matter of holiness because it is to be offered unto God. It is as much the duty of people in worldly business to live wholly unto God as it is the duty of those devoted to divine service. If, therefore, we desire to live unto God, it is necessary to bring our whole life under his law: to make his glory the sole rule and measure of our acting in every employment of life. For there is no other true devotion but this of living devoted to God in the common business of our lives.

Scripture (Psalm 119:30-36)

I have chosen the way of fidelity, I have moulded myself to your judgments. I cling to your judgments, Lord, do not disappoint me. I run the way of your commandments for you have given me freedom of heart. Teach me, Lord, the way of your will, and I will observe it. Give me understanding and I will observe your Law, and keep it wholeheartedly. Guide me in the way of your commandments, for my delight is there. Bend my heart to your instructions, not to selfish gain.

Wednesday (A Carthusian monk)

People in general suffer from a great illusion with regard to achieving independence in regard to the circumstances in which we live. They imagine that detachment and strength consists in cutting themselves off from things; but this isn't true. True strength lies in avoiding absolutely what God wants us to avoid, and in accepting all that he wants us to accept—in other words, in abandonment to his divine will. This is that holy indifference which is at the same time holy independence: the liberty of the children of God. These live, to all appearance, like everyone else, but interiorly they are very different. What dominates others, they dominate; and this is because they want only God. Thus their will is not deflected, much less carried away: in other words, they are free.

Scripture (1Kings 3:5-10)

God said to Solomon, "Ask what you would like me to give you." Solomon replied, "I am a young man, unskilled in leadership. And here is your servant, surrounded with your people, a people so numerous its number cannot be counted. So give your servant a heart to understand how to govern your people, how to discern between good and evil." God said, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies, here and now I do what you ask. What you have not asked, I will give you too."

Thursday (Henri Nouwen.)

The Jesus prayer or any other prayer form helps us to empty the mind of all that is not God and opens the possibility of living in the world without being of it. It requires first of all that we make God our only thought. This means that we must dispel all distractions, concerns, worries and fill the mind with God alone. 'The Kingdom of God is within you' Jesus said. The prayer of the heart takes this seriously. It allows us to prepare in the centre of our innermost being the home for the God who wants to dwell in us.

Scripture (Ephesians 4:17-18, 20-24)

So I say this to you in the Lord: do not go on living the empty-headed life that the pagans live. Intellectually they are in the dark and they are estranged from the life of God. You were taught what is the truth in Christ Jesus. You were to put aside your old self, which belongs to the old way of life and is corrupted by following illusory desires. Your mind was to be renewed in spirit so that you could put on the new person that has been created on God's principles.

Friday (Charles de Foucauld)

You know, when you are in love, you live less in yourself than in the one you love, and the more you are in love, the more you live outside yourself, in the one you love...

If we love Jesus, we live much more in him than in ourselves, we forget our own affairs and think only of his, and as he enjoys an unspeakable peace and happiness, seated at his Father's right hand, we share in the happiness of our divine beloved depending on how much we are in love.

Scripture (Matthew 13:44-46)

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off in his joy, sells everything he owns and buys the field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it."

Martin Bennett