**REFLECTION FOR 28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B**

**Wisdom 7:7-11 Hebrews 4:12-13 Mark 10:17-30**

In today’s Gospel we hear something that is not common in the Gospel. Normally in the Gospels when Jesus calls, people immediately drop their nets, drops their professional careers, leave their families and immediately follow Jesus except the man in today’s Gospel.

At first, the man sounds ready to become a disciple of Jesus. The man ran up, knelt before Jesus and said to Him, ‘Good master, what must l do to inherit eternal life?’ The man knows what he wants: eternal life. And he knows where to find it: in Jesus Christ.

Jesus listed the commandments for him. Without hesitation the man said he had kept them all.

The question to this man was even more pointed, ‘’With all your possessions, with your wealth, with all that you could give away, what positive good have you done to others? How much have you gone out of your way to help and comfort and strengthen others as you might have done?

The real question to us all is ‘’what good have you done?’’ It is not enough to obey the commandments. What good deeds can you show with your life.

Jesus tells the man, there is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, then come, follow me.

**“You are lacking one thing.”** We all have something in our lives that serves as obstacle to our happiness, peace, to be a better person and to be a better Christian.

We must recognize this obstacle and address it head-on. It may not be riches — it may be selfishness, anger, holding grudges, alcohol, drugs, lust, lies, fraud, unfaithfulness, it may be our failure to to pray for others’ needs as well as our own ,it may be failure to show compassion, forgiveness and love.

Jesus sought to invite the man and all of us out of our comfortable, respectable, settled life into the adventure of being a real Christian.

The man could not accept the conditions to become a disciple of Christ and he went away sad, for he was a man of great wealth.

Riches encourage a false independence. The rich think that everything has its price and they can buy their way into happiness. They think they can well deal with any situation which may arise so they don’t need God.

There comes a time when we discover that that is an illusion, that there are things which money cannot buy, and things from which money cannot save us.

Riches tend to make us selfish. Once we have possessed comfort and luxury, we always tends to fear the day when we may lose them. The result is that when we become wealthy, instead of having the impulse to share things, we are often have the impulse to cling on to them.

Jesus condemns a value system that makes “things” more valuable than people.

Jesus did not say that it was impossible for a rich person to become his disciple or to enter the kingdom of Heaven. Zacchaeus was one of the richest men in Jericho, yet he found the way in (Luke 19:9). Matthew the tax collector was rich and yet became one of the apostles (Matt 9:9-13), Joseph of Arimathaea was a rich man (Matt27:57). Nicodemus must have been very wealthy, for he brought spices to anoint the dead body of Jesus, which were worth a king’s ransom (John 19:39).

We will always be judged by two standards – how we got our possessions and how we use them. The more we have, the greater the responsibility that rests upon us. Will we use what we have selfishly or generously.

The Gospel is not about giving donations from one’s surplus; it is about sharing what one has with one’s brothers and sisters. The Gospel is really only interested in sharing, not just in almsgiving. In almsgiving, poverty is temporarily alleviated but not removed. In sharing, there is a solidarity. In the heart of every Christian there should be a desire to generous sharing. It is Christian to share with someone.

If we would fine happiness, joy, satisfaction, peace of mind and heart, if we would inherit eternal life, it would not just be observing rules and regulations. It shall be through reproducing God’s attitude of compassion, love and care for our brothers and sisters.

Today’s Scriptures invites us to seek wisdom about the priority we put on the things that we treasure.

Going through this Coronavirus pandemic has taught us many things. The one thing that stands out is what we have been taught about paying attention to the things that matters the most. Staying connected with God, family, friends, those in need, our health and the gift of eternal life are what matters.

God gives us time, talents, health and wealth and riches that we may use them as good stewards in the service of others.

**We need to “Do something beautiful for God” by reaching out to others.** Our most precious possession is our soul. Let us give ourselves away and give lavishly. Mother Teresa puts it in a different way: “Do SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL for God. Do it with your life. Do it every day. Do it in your own way. But do it!”

Fr Patrick