From the Desk of Fr. Leo

Of all the Gospels of the year, the Gospel this Sunday is one of the most puzzling. With the old translation we used to refer to it as the parable of the unjust steward, but with the new translation I suppose that we would think of it as the parable of the devious manager. In either case, we are shocked to think that Jesus could praise such a man.

It is true that the manager was irresponsible in his care of his employer's property. The Gospel says that he dissipated the rich man's possessions., which implies that he mishandled his affairs, probably for his own profit. When he received notice that he was going to be fined, he struck upon a plan to win favor with his employer's debtors. He called each one and reduced their debt. This action which is the heart of the parable, did not constitute another act of dishonesty, as we may be led to believe. The debt owed included the manager's commission, and what he apparently was doing was giving up that commission which belonged to him. Even today, some promissory notes are written not in the amount of the principal, but with the interest and commission totaled in. In other words, what the manager did was to give up his commission as a favor to the debtors, so that when he was fired, they would befriend him. And so, the employer gave the manager credit, not for being dishonest, but for showing initiative.

It was from the enterprise and initiative of the manger that Jesus drew his lesson. The manager not only had the good sense to realize that his future was in jeopardy, but he also decided to get some insurance for that future. He did a great favor for the debtors so that they would have to return the favor. As the manger himself said, “Here is a way to make sure that people will take me into their homes when I am let go.”

It is really a shame that we do not work harder at our own eternal security. Jesus says that we are to use this world's goods to gain a lasting reception in heaven. Money is not an end in itself. Money is supposed to be used to support one's family, to help the poor, to spread religion. Frankly, money is a great danger. We can make our whole lives an effort to build up wealth, and forget about the needs of others who are worse off than we. This was the kind of thoughtless greed condemned by the prophet Amos in the First Reading. Money can even make us forget about God and think that we can do without him. Even for those who are poor, money can be a problem, because we can easily be trapped into thinking about little else than getting more money.

We live in a society that canonizes the wealthy and forgets about eternal life. As Christians we must member that our true wealth, our lasting wealth, is in heaven. That is the kind of wealth which no one, not even someone like the devious manager, can steal from us.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues. September 20 11:00AM
No Mass

Wed. September 21 11:00AM
No Mass

Thur. September 22 11:00PM
No Mass

Fri. September 23 11:00AM
No Mass

Sat. September 24 4:30PM
John Heuser Sr. †, Kenny † and John III † — Jensen Family

Sun. September 18 9:00AM
Anne & Caesar Airoldi† — Your children

Port Costa 11:00AM
People of the Parish

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