

Ordinary 17 A - 2020

A wise man had reached the outskirts of the village and settled down under a tree for the night when a villager came running up to him and said, "The stone! The stone! Give me the precious stone!"

"What stone?" asked the wise man.

"Last night the Lord appeared to me in a dream," said the villager, "and told me that if I went to the outskirts of the village at dusk I should find a wise man who would give me a precious stone that would make me rich forever." The wise man rummaged in his bag and pulled out a stone. "He probably meant this one," said the wise man as he handed the stone over to the villager. "I found it on a forest path some days ago. You can certainly have it."

The man looked at the stone in wonder. It was a diamond. Probably the largest diamond in the whole world, for it was as large as a person's head. He took the diamond and walked away. All night he tossed about in bed, unable to sleep. The next day at the crack of dawn he woke the wise man and said, "Give me, rather, the wealth that makes it possible for you to give this diamond away so easily." [*J. Michael Byron, "Not always visible to the naked eye," Markings Readings - 109, 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time (The Thomas More Association, 205 West Monroe St. -- Sixth Floor, Chicago IL 60606-5097) July 2002.*]

My Dog Saw a Rabbit

There is a story from the Desert Fathers about a young monk who asked one of the old men of the desert why it is that so many people came out to the desert to seek God and yet most of them gave up after a short time and returned to their lives in the city.

The old monk told him, "Last evening my dog saw a rabbit running for cover among the bushes of the desert and he began to chase the rabbit, barking loudly. Soon other dogs joined in the chase, barking and running. They ran a great distance and alerted many other dogs. Soon the wilderness was echoing the sounds of their pursuit but the chase went on into the night. After a little while, many of the dogs grew tired and dropped out. A few

chased the rabbit until the night was nearly spent. By morning, only my dog continued the hunt.

"Do you understand," the old man said, "what I have told you?" "No," replied the young monk, "please tell me father." "It is simple," said the desert father, "my dog saw the rabbit."

Jesus told a parable about a man who one day in the market place saw the pearl of great price. The merchant understood at once the value of the commodity before him and he sacrificed everything to obtain it. *[by Brett Blair from www.eSermons.com]*

A former superintendent of schools in Palo Alto, California, remembered the son of the president of the school's board of trustees, Jim Tyner, who had great difficulty in school. He was classified as educationally handicapped and required a great deal of patience on the part of his parents and teachers. But Jim was a happy kid with a great smile that lit up the room. His parents acknowledged his academic difficulties, but always tried to help him to see his strengths so that he could walk with pride.

Shortly after Jim finished high school, he was killed in a motorcycle accident. After his death, his mother submitted this letter to the local newspaper. "Today we buried our 20-year-old son. He was killed instantly in a motorcycle accident on Friday night. How I wish I had known when I talked to him last that it would be the last time. If I had only known, I would have said, 'Jim, I love you and I'm so very proud of you.' I would have taken the time to count the many blessings he brought into the lives of the many who loved him. I would have taken time to appreciate his beautiful smile, the sound of his laughter, his genuine love of people.

When you put all the good attributes on the scale and you try to balance all the irritating traits such as the radio which was always too loud, the haircut that wasn't to our liking, the dirty socks under the bed, etc., the irritations don't amount to much. I won't get another chance to tell my son all I would have wanted him to hear, but, other parents, you do have a chance.

Tell your young people what you would want them to hear if you knew it would be your last conversation. The last time I talked to Jim was the day he died.

He called me to say, 'Hi, Mom! I just called to say I love you. Got to go to work. Bye.' He gave me something to treasure forever. If there is any purpose at all to Jim's death, maybe it is to make others appreciate more of life and to have people, especially families, take the time to let each other know just how much we care. You may never have another chance. Do it today! [***Do It Today***, copyright 1994 by Robert Reasoner. Reprinted in **[A Second Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul](#)**, copyright 1995 by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen. Health Communications, Inc., Deerfield Beach, FL. Used with the author's permission.]