

Ordinary 18B - 2021

Fr. Tony (<http://frtonyshomilies.com/>)

"And that's the rest of the story."

"Remember the radio commentator Paul Harvey? His trademark—his "schtick," as they say in show business — was telling engaging human-interest stories. Halfway through the story he would stop—tantalizing listeners with only part of the story - then later finish the story with his famous tag line, "And that's the rest of the story."

Last week Jesus gives us page one. Jesus feeds the hungry crowd, working the great miracle of the loaves and fishes. The folks rush to make Jesus their king. "More miracles they cry!" "Happy days are here again. Our troubles are over! No more working for our daily bread." But Jesus leaves them—Today we get, the "rest of the story." The joyous crowds search for Jesus, and they track him down.

But Jesus confronts them. He tells them: "You don't want Me; you want a miracle worker to make all hunger in your life disappear." (Rev. Michael Seger).

This week nobody died:

The story is told of two old friends who bumped into one another on the street one day. One of them looked forlorn, almost on the verge of tears. His friend asked, "What has the world done to you, my old friend?"

The sad fellow said, "Let me tell you. Three weeks ago, an uncle died and left me \$40,000." "That's a lot of money." "But, two weeks ago, a cousin I never even knew, died, and left me \$85,000 free and clear." "Sounds like you've been blessed...." "You don't understand!" he interrupted. "Last week my great aunt passed away. I inherited almost a quarter of a million."

Now he was really confused. "Then, why do you look so glum?" "This week ... nothing!" — Gratitude is something that you only feel when a gift is truly appreciated. Today's Gospel describes Jesus correcting the wrong attitude of his listeners who had gathered around.

Idolizing without trusting:

Actor Tony Randall, famous for his role as Felix in *The Odd Couple*, once had an experience that surely was the inspiration for a current credit card commercial. Randall was in a jewelry store in New York City. The store's owner recognized him and became very excited. He declared that Randall was his all-time favorite actor. What a treat it would be for his wife, the man said, if she could talk to the Tony Randall. Randall graciously agreed. So, the man called his wife, and Randall had a short, pleasant conversation with her as she gushed on and on about how wonderful he was. Finally, Randall came to the point of his visit to the jewelry store. There was a gold necklace in the window that had caught his eye. He'd like to buy it. Would the store accept a personal check?

The storeowner hesitated, then asked, "Do you have any identification?" — Recognition only goes so far.

The storeowner was ready to idolize Tony Randall; he wasn't ready to trust him. You see where this is leading, don't you? Is it possible for people to come in this House today and worship Jesus-but still not trust him with their lives?

"Sir, I'm building a cathedral for God."

Three laborers were dragging massive stones.

The first was asked by a reporter what he was doing.

The reply was terse, "I'm dragging a big stone, and it's breaking my back."

He put the same query to the second fellow. His reply was, "I'm helping to build a wall, and I need your help right now."

The journalist politely declined. He moved on to ask the third man. He replied with a smile: "Sir, I'm building a cathedral for God."

As Catholics, we have to examine our attitude to work. Are we working for the food which lasts and which gives eternal life as today's Gospel suggests? Or are we part of the problem? Are we giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay? (Fr. James Gilhooley).