



TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

OCTOBER 10, 2021

Fr. Bob Kabat

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

Once upon a time, a newly married couple were struggling with their finances. After a depressing review of their budget, the young man said to his wife, "I know that things are tough now and we have to stretch every dollar. But I am going to work hard, and some day we are going to be rich." The young wife looked at her husband lovingly and said, "We are rich. Maybe someday we will have money."

When most of us hear today's gospel we say to ourselves, "This is one gospel I do not have to worry about. No one can accuse me of being rich."

When other gospels admonish the selfish, the stubborn, the spiteful it stings my conscience, but not this gospel.

How many of us packed food this past week at Feed My Starving Children? There we felt rich, as we are not hurting for food as the hungry children are, we are trying to feed them through Feed My Starving Children.

Today's gospel is not directed to any specific income bracket. It applies to everyone. It applies to our attitude toward money and possessions and how it affects our perspective on life and faith.

Or, to use the gospel image, the camel comes in all sizes, as does the eye of the needle.

The gospel danger of riches is not how much we have, but how much it has us. "Are you a prisoner of your own possessions?" The rich man in the gospel was a prisoner of his own possessions. When he asked Christ what he must do to inherit everlasting life, Christ answered that he must observe the commandments. The young man replied that he had never broken a single one of them. But Christ was talking about more than not breaking rules. He was speaking of a commitment of the heart.

Christ then challenged his commitment by asking him to share his wealth. Christian faith is a commitment of the heart which is not limited by any attachment. The rich man, precisely because he was rich, has set a limit. His wealth. It was the one thing that he could not part with. The startling message of this dialogue between Christ and the rich man is that we can keep all ten commandments, never break a one and yet not enter eternal life.

Today's gospel forces me to ask, "Am I the rich man in this gospel?" Is my fundamental commitment to the life of Christ, or to something else? What really possessed me? You? How do I use my money to help others? Isn't that what church support and our charity to other worthy causes is for? It is about relationships.

The young wife reminded her anxious husband about the priorities of life. What really makes us rich? We are rich – in many ways. Some day we might even have money.

Thanks for listening.

Prayer from Bringing Home the Word