

PLEASE TAKE SPARE PEW

BULLETINS to anyone housebound or absent this morning.

BEFORE the service, talk to God.
During the service, listen to God.
After the service, talk with each other.

FAITH BOOK: *Mini-reflections on the Sunday scripture readings designed for persons on the run.*

From today's Ecclesiastes reading:

Vanity of vanities, says Quheleth,
vanity of vanities! All things are vanity!

Reflection:

Qoheleth is a wakeup call directing our attention away from the ephemeral towards what will last. Here is a mantra we repeat as a daily reminder to avoid greed and practice a simpler life, "I have all that I want, I have all that I need." It's a statement that can stir thanksgiving in our hearts as we offer today's Eucharist.

So, we ask ourselves:

- Have I placed my trust in what is passing and will not sustain me in times of difficulty?
- What re-ordering must I do in my priorities to put more balance in my life?

*Jude Siciliano, OP,
Southern Dominican Province, USA*

connection with the Franciscan Brothers – particularly because of our brothers in PNG and Solomons, and also Korea and elsewhere. Many of our older brothers knew and worked with ABM missionaries in PNG, 'back in the day'. We work under different arrangements, different structures – but at grassroots level we are all people who have a passion for the gospel and for helping build up local church ministries and programmes. To me, ABM feels like a family connection.

Brother Christopher John SSF



The pericope on greed and the parable of the rich barn-builder (12:13-21) is distinctively Lucan. The hopes to divide an inheritance equally or to enlarge a growing business, understandable in themselves, run against the contention that strong interest in material possessions is not reconcilable with interest in God. Ideally Christians are asked to live by the maxim "One's life does not depend on what one possesses" (12:15...). The fate of the barn-builder reflects the expectation of an individual judgment taking place before the general judgment at the end of the world. A passage decrying cares about earthly things (12:22-34) illustrates how well off one can be without such cares. The instruction, "Sell your possessions and give alms" (12:33) is very Lucan in its outlook.

*Raymond E. Brown,
An Introduction to the New Testament*



Where there is greed, what love can there be?

Sikh saying



My own first memory of ABM was meeting Bishop Ken Mason in the early 80s when he was also Bishop Protector for the Society of St Francis, the Anglican Franciscan order. ABM has had a long

What's Really Important?

*What measures of success do we have?
Why does society reduce success to
material wealth, fame, or power?*

How many of us look out for a "sure thing?" The score. The big pay-off. The retirement check. Watch enough late-night cable television and you will find the same "get rich quick" infomercials play over and over. Look beyond the gloss of these presentations and you will find one fact. If you really want to make big money, sell greed!

Is the road to success paved with greed? Jesus didn't think so.

... the gospel teaches us to store up what is important: faith in God and active compassion for one's neighbour. [12:21] Faith in God flies in the face of cynicism. Compassion flies in the face of greed. Together, faith and compassion challenge what people believe is really important in life.

*Larry Broding,
word-sunday.com*



A Christian

**is not someone
who never goes wrong,
but one who
is enabled to repent
and pick himself up
and begin again,
because the Christ-life
is inside him.**

*C. S. Lewis,
Mere Christianity*



Earth provides enough to satisfy everyone's need, but not everyone's greed.

Mahatma Gandhi



Expensive Breakfast

In this re-told tale, King Midas has been given the ability to turn to gold all that he touches - including his food, his garden roses, and, later in the story, his beloved daughter.

And, truly, my dear little folks, did you ever hear of such a pitiable case in all your lives? Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest labourer, sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water, was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold. And what was to be done? Already, at breakfast, Midas was excessively hungry. Would he be less so by dinner time? And how ravenous would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of indigestible dishes as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive a continuance of this rich fare?

*Nathaniel Hawthorne
The Golden Touch*





Give me a heart of flesh to replace this heart of stone. Help me to be present to You this moment in love. And the next moment. Help me to know You in love and in Your Love. Give me a habit of love, so that when that very night comes, I might respond in love and in Love.

*St. Teresa of Avila
The Way of Perfection*



Monastic Wisdom

More

We are pressured from within to become more – but we need not become perfect. The unfolding of our purpose is never final. God wants more and more of us, and in God's time the Spirit bestows more and more of us to offer in return.

Br. Keith Nelson, SSJE

Change

The world and Church are in crisis: economically, environmentally, demographically, politically. No matter how well certain patterns of behavior have served us in the past, they may, or may not, serve us in the future. If we are to serve the Church and the world in the years to come, we cannot simply do what we have always done. We cannot afford to remain frozen. We need to take the risk to change.

Br. James Koester, SSJE

Burdens

What is it that fills you with anxiety and fear? What burdens or cares are sapping

your strength, day after day? Take a moment to identify and name them ... and then picture yourself handing them over to Christ. He assures us that we need not carry life's burdens on our own. He is ready to shoulder them with us, to make light whatever it is that is weighing us down.

Br. David Vryhof, SSJE



To get the full flavour of an herb, it must be pressed between the fingers, so it is the same with the Scriptures; the more familiar they become, the more they reveal their hidden treasures and yield their indescribable riches.

St. John Chrysostom



Spiritual Discipline

When we begin to ask what the conditions of inner renewal are, we receive essentially the same answers from nearly all of those whom we have most reason to respect. One major answer is the emphasis upon discipline. In the conduct of one's own life it is soon obvious, as many have learned the hard way, that empty freedom is a snare and a delusion. In following what comes naturally or easily, life simply ends in confusion, and in consequent disaster. Without the discipline of time, we spoil the next day the night before, and without the discipline of prayer, we are likely to end by having practically no experience of the divine-human encounter. However compassionate we may be with others, we dare not be soft or indulgent with ourselves. Excellence comes at a price and one of the major prices is that of inner control.

We have not advanced very far in our spiritual lives if we have not encountered the basic paradox of freedom, to the effect that we are most free when we are bound. But not just any way of being bound will suffice; what matters is the character of our binding. The one who would like to be an athlete, but who is unwilling to discipline his [or her] body by regular exercise and by abstinence, is not free to excel on the field or the track.... Failure to train rigorously and to live abstemiously denies [that person] the freedom to go over the bar at the desired height, or to run with the desired speed and endurance. With one concerted voice the giants of the devotional life apply the same principle to the whole of life with the dictum: *Discipline is the price of freedom.*

Elton Trueblood,
The New Man for Our Time



**To have what we want is
riches, but to be able to do
without is power.**

George MacDonald



My Lord, today I will make a thousand choices, big and small, consequential and trivial. In the midst of all these decisions, help me to choose the one thing needed for a richer, more vital life in you. Amen.

A Guide to Prayer for All God's People

August 6 – Transfiguration of the Lord

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with some differences of detail, all record the episode shortly after Peter's great confession of faith, in which Jesus takes Peter, James and John up a mountain and is transfigured as a sign of his divine glory. The presence of Moses and Elijah attests the endorsement by Law and Prophets of Jesus' mission, and the divine voice from the cloud of God's glory confirms the status of Jesus and approves his coming journey to Jerusalem.

For All the Saints

Eternal God, our glorious King,
whose Son Jesus Christ was transfigured
on the holy mountain
and seen in splendour by his chosen
witnesses:

grant us, his followers, faith to perceive his
glory,

to listen to him, and to walk in his way,
that we may be changed into his likeness
from glory to glory;

for he lives and reigns with you and the
Holy Spirit,

on God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

APBA

