

August 4, 2019

From Fr. Jim . . .



**About the Gospel:** A dictionary definition of the word – greed is: “a selfish and excessive desire for more of something than is needed.” The rich man who is featured in the Gospel for today fits this definition perfectly. He has such a bountiful harvest that he is not able to use it all. He has too much just for himself. So, instead of sharing it with others, he builds bigger barns to store it for himself. Foolishly, he thinks and acts like he has it made for many, many years. He will have no worries about providing for himself for years to come. The rich man doesn’t consider what he would do if these material things do not last or if he should die the next day. Our possessions do not last forever and we cannot take them with us when we die.

As we live in this world, we must be careful that our desire for more does not take over or control every aspect of our lives. Although we are often tempted to put all our trust in our material possessions and our possessions can truly possess us, no thing will ever satisfy our deepest hunger. But God can and will. St, Augustine said: “Our hearts are restless until they can find rest in you.”

So, we set our hearts on the higher spiritual gifts. We share our time, talent and treasure to build God’s kingdom and to love others as we are loved. We trust that what we give of ourselves will produce a hundredfold and that God cannot be out done in generosity. God will continue caring for us and providing for us generously and abundantly. We can keep sharing a lot because God keeps providing for us and giving to us a lot. Such is the kingdom of God and such is living with and sharing heavenly treasures. In this way, all of us are rich in the kingdom of God.

**The Sunday Mass Collection:** In the early days of the church, the collection at Mass consisted of bread and wine brought from the people’s homes to be used for the Eucharist. Also, the people shared their possessions: food, livestock, household goods. The deacons distributed these offerings to those who were most in need in the community as well as given for the material needs of the church.

Today, ritually, bread and wine are still given but usually not from people’s homes and the gifts for the poor and the church are given in the form of money. Appreciating, respecting, honoring and participating in the great loving sacrifice of God’s Son on the cross that we celebrate at Mass, Christians give something of ourselves that is a real sacrifice - something that we would rather hold onto and not give up. For many if not most of us today, it is money. With the collection, we bring the gift of ourselves, the work of human hands and the fruit of the vine to the altar.

The money we give at Mass certainly helps pay the bills and keeps the lights on, but it also helps the Body of Christ live as the Body of Christ by supporting the many ministries and services we can provide through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy (teaching the faith, ministering to youth, immigrants and refugees, helping the poor and the sick, preparing liturgy etc.)

With this sacrifice of ourselves, we express our trust in God and give the fruits of our work back to God for the building of the kingdom. We thank God and acknowledge that every good gift we have been given first and foremost comes from God. Thank you all for your ongoing generosity and your loving sacrifice of self that is growing our parish and making it what it is today. Thank you for being Eucharist for so many.

**Missionary Appeal:** Every year for many, many years now, Saint Leo Parish has participated in the Missionary Cooperative Appeal with the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. We are blessed to welcome missionaries each year who share about the work of their mission. This weekend, we welcome Father Matthew from Africa. Father will preach the 10:30am Mass today (Sunday) and the second collection today will support his missionary work.