

## **HOMILY for 25<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME – Year C**

This Sunday's Gospel talks about business and manager. As I reflect on that message, I'm reminded of this cute story I'd like to share with you.

Two accountants are in a bank when armed robbers burst in. While several of the robbers take the money from the tellers, others line up the customers, including the accountants, and proceed to take their wallets, watches, & so on. While this is going on, the first accountant jams something into the second accountant's hand. Without looking down, the second accountant whispers, "What is this?"

To which the first accountant replies, "It's that \$50 I owe you!"

It's interesting to see how people react when they are put on the spot as we just see in the cute story. The story lets us know how the two accountants were put on the spot as they were caught in a bank robbery. Because of that, one of them tried to settle with his friend & pay back what he owed.

This Sunday's Readings share with us two other stories on how a person could be put on the spot & react to it. The First Story is being told in today's Gospel about a manager who was reported for dissipating the property of a rich man. He was summoned & put on the spot as following: "What is it I hear about you? Give me an account of your service, for it is about to come to an end." So, apparently a manager does not perform his job well & makes the business lose the money. His boss calls him in for a review before firing him. That's how this manager was put on a spot. Here is how he reacts to it: "...The manager thought to himself, 'What shall I do next? My employer is sure to dismiss me. I cannot dig ditches. I am ashamed to go begging. I have it! Here is a way to make sure that people will take me into their homes when I am let go.' So, he called in each of his master's debtor & [let the person change one's debt to a lower amount.]"

As we just heard, the manager is put on the spot by his boss's review of his job performance. The manager reacts to that by calling in his boss' debtors & letting them write down a lower amount. What he does after being put on the spot is first acknowledge his inevitable end in the near horizon & then try to do something to give himself a bright future. He even uses his old position & remaining influence to help him earn good reputation in the future. He is able to prepare for his future by using what he currently has even though he'll only have it for a short time. His boss praises him for being "enterprising" by doing what he did. His foresight & initiative to prepare for the future moves Jesus to make this comment: "...What I say to you is this: Make friends for yourselves through your use of this world's goods, so that when they fail you, a lasting reception will be yours. If you can trust a person in little things, you can also trust him in greater. If you cannot be trusted with elusive wealth, who will trust you with lasting?" Jesus wants to use the story of the "enterprising" manager in today's Gospel to encourage us to prepare well for our future. He calls us to make good use of our earthly resources to help us have the best future in Heaven. He asks us to exchange our possessions of this life for all the blessings of the eternal life.

If we talk to a successful businessman/woman & ask him/her about the key to his/her success, he/she would tell us that we got to learn to trade well. A wise & prudent trader would have a better chance of beating the odds & find great successes. This person would know how to buy low & sell high. This person would use his/her available resources to make a good

product & trade it for something better. That's how a wise & prudent businessman/woman makes good profits & grows his/her business. This person does not cheat & trample on the poor & the needy to succeed like what we heard in today's First Reading. Unfortunately, our world is full of people who would not hesitate to cheat & destroy others to succeed. These folks don't think that they can be held accountable for their evil acts & continue to carry out their evil ways of life day after day. To these folks, they Lord wants to put them on spot & makes this warning in today's First Reading, "Hear this who trample upon the needy & destroy the poor of the land! ...The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Never will I forget a thing they have done!" So, the Lord wants the people who conduct those evil acts to think about His warning & their future & begin to turn their lives around. They need to wake up & think about where they might end up after this life. A wise & prudent person would do everything to achieve eternal life in Heaven. For eternity is a long time for a person to end up in the other place.

The Lord might not like us to do bad things & follow an evil way of life. Only the Devil would want us to do evil things & end up in the dark place with it for eternity. For that is the ultimate goal & sneaky mission of the Devil. But, in the end, the Lord wishes that we'd turn away from our bad habits & evil ways of life & come home to Him. He hopes that we'd embrace His salvation & eternal life. He prays that we'd make good use of His blessings for us here on earth to win for ourselves a place in Heaven. Today's Second Reading shares with us that hope of the Lord as following, "...I [Paul] urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, & thanksgivings be offered for all, especially for kings & those in authority, that we may be able to lead undisturbed & tranquil lives in perfect piety & dignity. Prayer of this kind is good, & God our Savior is pleased with it, for He wants all to be saved & come to know the truth." So, Paul believes that we should pray for the whole world to convert its life from darkness & turn to our God for salvation. For our God desires the whole world to be saved & have a share in eternal life.

My dear brothers & sisters, we've been blessed with various things in this life. Some have been given more blessings while others have to carry a few extra crosses. We often use those blessings to satisfy our needs on earth. Today we're called to think about our future & use those blessings to prepare ourselves to gain the eternal life in Heaven. We should make good use of God's blessings for us in this life & exchange for the salvation & eternal life in God's Kingdom. So, let me leave with you these words of advice of Jesus in today's Gospel to ponder a little further: "...Make friends for yourselves through your use of this world's goods, so that when they fail you, a lasting reception will be yours."