18th.Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C) (July 31, 2022). Eccl 1:2; 2:21-23; Col 3:1-5, 9-11; Lk 12:13-21.

“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity…”; And so, “Make yourself rich in the sight of God”, says the Lord.

Introduction: The common theme of today’s readings is the futility of the greedy acquisition of wealth and power because everything and everyone is “here today and gone tomorrow.” So, the meaning of life cannot be found in selfishly hoarding wealth and possessions, but only in sharing these with the needy.

**Scripture:** The first reading, taken from Ecclesiastes, reminds us that the greedy acquisition and hording of material wealth is useless because when the hoarder dies, he goes to eternity empty-handed, and his heir gains, and perhaps squanders, his riches.

**In today’s Gospel,** Jesus, telling the parable of the foolish rich man, warns us against all types of greed, because greed takes our life’s focus away from God and away from serving and loving Him in Himself and in other people. Jesus says that God calls the greedy rich man a fool because the man thought he would not die soon and that he was not accountable for the way he used his riches. Besides, the rich man forgot the fact that his wealth had been lent to him by God for sharing with the needy. Jesus also warns us that our eternal life does not consist of earthly possessions (Lk 12:15), which we should share to gain eternal life.

**Lesson: Q= How much is too much?** A certain amount of money and material possessions are necessary if we are to live up to are dignity as human beings and children of God. Indeed, Christ was aware of this, that’ why he asked in the “Our Father”, to pray for our daily bread”.

**Hence his Parable is not then about need.** It is about greed, pure and simple! The man in the story was rich to begin with, but he wasn’t still satisfied. Thus, greed is like a fire- the more wood you pile on it, the hungrier it gets. For the greedy person, there is no such thing as enough**. So how much is too much?** **When we have obtained those things which are basically necessary to live (food, clothes, shelter, warmth, etc.) where do we go from here? Do we continue to stockpile more of them, or do we pursue superfluities?**

**Conclusion:** Christ’s parable is not directed only at the rich. It is directed at each of us, for anyone can be bitten by bug of greed. Mark this, a poor person can be just as greedy as wealthy person, maybe even more greedy. In other words, it is not how much we possess that does the damage, but your attitude towards what we possess. **HAPPINESS IS NOT HAVING WHAT YOU WANT BUT WANTING WHAT YOU HAVE.**

Therefore, **“acquisitiveness”** i.e. excessive interest in acquiring money or material things, is the most foolish of all vices, because no amount of possessions can make our lives here on earth secure- “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity…”; And so today let’s heed the Lord’s advice, **“Make yourself rich in the sight of God”. Goodness of life is the real treasure. A good person is a rich person.** An empty heart is the only poverty we should fear, that is, a heart which is devoid of love, peace and serenity. It’s not what we carry in our purses or in our bank accounts that makes us rich. By this I mean, **“We prove our greatness, not by the amount of our possessions, but by the grandeur of our actions” (Solzhenitsyn).**