

The Living Word

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

3 August 2025

First Reading Eccl 1:2; 2:21-23

What do people gain by all their work?

Vanity of vanities, the Preacher says. Vanity of vanities. All is vanity!

For so it is that a man who has laboured wisely, skilfully and successfully must leave what is his own to someone who has not toiled for it at all. This, too, is vanity and great injustice; for what does he gain for all the toil and strain that he has undergone under the sun? What of all his laborious days, his cares of office, his restless nights? This, too, is vanity.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 89:3-6. 12-14. 17. R. v.1

(R.) In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

1. You turn men back into dust and say: 'Go back, sons of men.' To your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday, come and gone, no more than a watch in the night. *(R.)*
2. You sweep men away like a dream, like grass which springs up in the morning.
In the morning it springs up and flowers: by evening it withers and fades. *(R.)*
3. Make us know the shortness of our life that we may gain wisdom of heart. Lord, relent! Is your anger for ever? Show pity to your servants. *(R.)*
4. In the morning, fill us with your love; we shall exult and rejoice all our days. Let the favour of the Lord be upon us: give success to the work of our hands. *(R.)*

Second Reading Col 3:1-5, 9-11

Seek the things that are above where Christ is.

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed – and he is your life – you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

That is why you must kill everything in you that belongs only to earthly life: fornication, impurity, guilty passion, evil desires and especially greed, which is the same thing as worshipping a false god; and never tell each other lies. You have stripped off your old behaviour with your old self, and you have put on a new self which will progress towards true knowledge the more it is renewed in the image of its creator; and in that image there is no room for distinction between Greek and Jew, between the circumcised or the uncircumcised, or between barbarian and Scythian, slave and free man. There is only Christ: he is everything and he is in everything.

Gospel Acclamation Mt 5:3

Alleluia, alleluia!

Happy the poor in spirit;

the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

Alleluia!



Gospel Lk 12:13-21

To whom will all this wealth of yours go?

A man in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Master, tell my brother to give me a share of our inheritance.' 'My friend,' he replied, 'who appointed me your judge, or the arbitrator of your claims?' Then he said to them, 'Watch, and be on your guard against avarice of any kind, for a man's life is not made secure by what he owns, even when he has more than he needs.'

Then he told them a parable: 'There was once a rich man who, having had a good harvest from his land, thought to himself, "What am I to do? I have not enough room to store my crops." Then he said, "This is what I will do; I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and store all my grain and my goods in them, and I will say to my soul: My soul, you have plenty of good things laid by for many years to come; take things easy, eat, drink, have a good time." But God said to him, "Fool! This very night the demand will be made for your soul; and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?" So it is when a man stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God.'

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Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Conversation is what makes us human: we are word animals. Anyone who has been in hospital for some time knows that it is the lack of conversation which starts to tell. We need mouth to mouth resuscitation.

Did you notice in today's Gospel that the rich landowner is constantly murmuring to himself. He poses questions which *he* answers. He is so bound up with his possessions that there is no room in his life for real conversation with people or with God.

In muttering to himself, the rich man was becoming dehumanised and in danger that at the moment of death, he could find himself monologuing for all eternity, and that is a Hellish existence. He, and we, need to learn the language of Heaven and we begin that on earth.

There are two partners of conversation we need: With God we call it prayer. The Our Father is the conversation of the children of God with their heavenly Father. With other people, real dialogue might reveal something about them such that we need to respond wholeheartedly.

And then, draw closer to Our Lady who was the greatest conversation partner with God: 'Be it done unto me according to Thy word.' She is constantly trying to draw us into her conversation with God.

We could pause for a moment to ask Our Lady to help us to learn and practise the language of Heaven: 'now, and at the hour of our death.' Amen.

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