

# Sunday Message

18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 3 August 2025 • Psalter Week 2

## GETTING OUR PRIORITIES RIGHT

LUKE 12:13-21



The parable of the wealthy landowner is one of the most chilling of all the parables of Jesus.

As he sees his barns unable to hold the year's bumper harvest, the landowner begins to talk to his soul or to "think out loud". He makes big plans for the future. He needs new barns to hold an even bigger harvest. Then he will be able to retire, pay a steward to look after the running of the estate, and say to his soul, "eat, drink and be merry". Life will be good.

But he has left one vital element out of his calculations: no one knows how long a lease they have on life. This man is destined to die in the coming night, and what good will all his wealth be then?

In his greed and self-absorption, in his arrogance and complacency, the landowner had focused solely on earthly things – money, comfort, pleasure – and had forgotten about heavenly things. He had no concern for anyone or anything other than himself. He had no time for God. He failed to put God first.

The story of the rich landowner is deeply challenging. It is not a sin to be well off or even to put one's human energies into a business that brings in a good profit. Where the moral issues arise is in the kind of stewardship we exercise over our resources. At creation, God committed the earth and its wealth to the first human beings to cultivate and care for it. We should not, for example, make limitless profit from the earth in a way that endangers its climate, or pay subsistence wages to sweat-shop workers in poor countries in order to pile our shop counters high with cheap goods. We should not exploit for personal gain. Sins like these and many others can be traced back to the deadly or root sin of greed. ■

## REFLECT

**H**ow do we define success in today's world? What criteria do we commonly use? To be successful is to make it onto the *Sunday Times* Rich List. It is to own properties in the right places, or to feature regularly in the gossip columns and magazines that follow the lives of the rich and famous.

If we don't meet this definition of success, we can at least dream about it and work for it. We can seek to be online "influencers". We can buy Lottery tickets in the hope that we'll strike it lucky; we can gamble on the horses; we can work 24/7 to build up our business; we can play the stock market.

All of which can be okay, so long as we do not forget the point that Jesus makes in today's Gospel. There is only one prize worth going for, one treasure we must seek above all else – eternal life among the communion of saints in God's heavenly kingdom. The way we do that is to love God and neighbour and to do God's will. If we do that, then we will be rich indeed. ■

## DO

Take the risk of giving – giving up, giving away. It will set you free. And you'll find that it's not just the Lord who loves the cheerful giver.

Think about your priorities. When all is said and done, what is most important to you?



## SAY

"Lord, help me to work for the treasure that truly counts. Amen."

## PRAY

In your prayers this week, ask the Lord to strengthen your faith, so that you see it as the greatest of all treasures.

## LEARN

The Christian puts God first in everything.

Greed and avarice are contrary to the Gospel.

"Vanity" is a translation of the Hebrew word *hebel*, which means "vapour" or "breath", i.e. something insubstantial and ephemeral, something you cannot grasp or hold onto. It's the key word in the Book of Ecclesiastes, occurring thirty-eight times.



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*O God, come to my assistance;  
O Lord, make haste to help me!  
You are my rescuer, my help;  
O Lord, do not delay.*

**COLLECT**

Draw near to your servants, O Lord,  
and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness,  
that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide,  
you may restore what you have created  
and keep safe what you have restored.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes.

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

Sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge  
and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did  
not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. What has a man  
from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the  
sun? For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation.  
Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 90 (89):3-4. 5-6. 12-13. 14, 17. R.1

**R: O Lord, you have been our refuge,  
from generation to generation.**

1. You turn man back to dust,  
and say, 'Return, O children of Adam.'  
To your eyes a thousand years  
are like yesterday, come and gone,  
or like a watch in the night. **R.**
2. You sweep them away like a dream,  
like grass which is fresh in the morning.  
In the morning it sprouts and is fresh;  
by evening it withers and fades. **R.**
3. Then teach us to number our days,  
that we may gain wisdom of heart.  
Turn back, O LORD! How long?  
Show pity to your servants. **R.**
4. At dawn, fill us with your merciful love;  
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.  
Let the favour of the LORD our God be upon us;  
give success to the work of our hands.  
O give success to the work of our hands. **R.**

**SECOND READING** Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters: If you have been raised with Christ, seek the  
things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand  
of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things  
that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with

Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you  
also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, what is  
earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and  
covetousness, which is idolatry. Do not lie to one another, seeing  
that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on  
the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image  
of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and  
uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all,  
and in all.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL** Matthew 5:3

**R: Alleluia, alleluia.**

Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**R: Alleluia.**

**GOSPEL** Luke 12:13-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

At that time: Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, tell my  
brother to divide the inheritance with me.' But he said to him, 'Man,  
who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?' And he said to them,  
'Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's  
life does not consist in the abundance of one's possessions.' And  
he told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a rich man produced  
plentifully, and he thought to himself, "What shall I do, for I have  
nowhere to store my crops?" And he said, "I will do this: I will tear  
down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my  
grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample  
goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry."' But God  
said to him, "Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the  
things you have prepared, whose will they be?" So is the one who  
lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Graciously sanctify these gifts, O Lord, we pray,  
and, accepting the oblation of this spiritual sacrifice,  
make of us an eternal offering to you.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**You have given us, O Lord, bread from heaven,  
endowed with all delights and sweetness in every taste.**

Or

**I am the bread of life, says the Lord;  
whoever comes to me will not hunger  
and whoever believes in me will not thirst.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Accompany with constant protection, O Lord,  
those you renew with these heavenly gifts  
and, in your never-failing care for them,  
make them worthy of eternal redemption.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**