

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel according to Luke (*Luke 12:32-34*)

(Jesus said) Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ God does not call us to be successful but faithful

Our world today is an unreal, temporary world. Though we are living in a world originally created by God, we have managed to change it beyond recognition. At every level of society, human pride and greed have crept in. We live in a corrupt world driven by money and wealth, comfort and pleasures, power and influence, fame and popularity, and beauty and self absorption. The pressures of the media bear down on the individual to be successful and ambitious. Success is measured in terms of material wealth. Sins are promoted as choices and human rights. Falsehoods are promoted as truths and virtues. The Prince of this world (Satan, the Deceiver) is now at the height of his reign. Just as his power is temporary and only as long as God allows it, so too will this world, as we know it, be. This corrupted world of violence, falsehood and selfishness will crash like a house constructed with a pack of cards to give way to the real Kingdom of God where love, peace and joy will reign.

Just as heaven is above the earth, so are God's ways different from ours. God's perspective is eternity. He is concerned with our eternal good as He has made our souls eternal. Those who are faithful to Him till the end will inherit riches that will not fade. He has warned us not to be too taken up with the riches of this temporary world. *You cannot serve both God and money (Matthew 6:24). What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? (Matthew 16:26).* We are on pilgrimage on earth and have limited time in our life, and we have to decide for ourselves who the master over our life is.

Jesus comes to give us an example of how to live and love. Jesus came into our world in the flesh, borne incarnate as a human baby, stripped of all His heavenly glory. *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross (Philippians 2:6-8).* Jesus was born into poverty and died shamefully and in agony. He was not accepted by the religious authorities that instead tried to kill Him. Jesus possessed no property and did not even have His own tomb to be buried in. Jesus endures the cross and thinks nothing of its shame in order to step into the glory and joy set before Him (cf Hebrews 12:2), which He will share with us. There is only one way to the Promised Land – the Kingdom of Jesus – the way of the cross which Jesus has already gone ahead of us.

Having been obedient to His Father to the last, Jesus has the full force of His loving example when He said to us: *If you love Me, keep My commandments (John 14:15).* Jesus makes it clear what His commandments are. We are to put God first. Once we are able to do this, true love for God will flow into genuine and steadfast love for others. Because of the sake of God, we will be able to love even those who make life difficult for us.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You are the author and perfecter of my faith. When You came into the flesh into our sinful world, You resolutely focused on Your mission to save all humanity even when You were presented many temptations. Through Your triumph over these temptations, give me the strength to walk in Your footsteps eschewing the lure of material wealth, pleasures, comfort, popularity and all the trappings of a so-called 'good life' as defined by this world. You remind me that though I am in this world, I am not of this world but a citizen of the Kingdom that never ends. Help me walk everyday by Your side faith-filled, in obedience and humility. Mary, Mother of Salvation and best disciple of Jesus, give me a share of Your blind faith. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.