

Twenty Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C
Amos 8: 4-7 || 1 Timothy 2:1-8 || Luke 16:1- 13
PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE MISSION

Synopsis:

The challenges of the unfaithful servant.

The prudence of the servant.

Our challenges from the parable.

Let us “be prudent” about the use of wealth.

Let us cultivate the virtue of “trustworthiness.”

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1). The challenges of the unfaithful servant: Today’s Gospel tells us the parable of the unfaithful servant who has failed his duty of stewardship. He faces the prospect of unemployment, reduced status and even ridicule. But then, he was more roll of the dice and he does it wisely. He calls the master’s debtors and writes down the debts. In other words, he banks on his master’s generosity. By writing down the debts, he actually makes the claim that his master cannot fault him: that the master forgives those who owe him, that he is generous and magnanimous. For banking on this defining virtue of his master, the dishonest servant was praised.

2). The prudence of the servant: It also speaks about learning how to use well whatever we have. There is an admiration for the dishonest steward, not for his dishonesty but for his ability to figure his way out of a mess that he had created. In the parable the steward wasn’t honest, but he was CLEVER and RESOURCEFUL. The rich man soon learned about this plan and what did he do? Did he throw him into prison for this dishonest handling of his debts? No, surprisingly he PRAISED him for his sense of urgency and cleverness.

Let us examine about ourselves? How able are we to figure out the spiritual life and to work towards its goals? Perhaps at times we seem able to figure out the spiritual life because it is not all that complicated. Do we begin to live spiritually then? Today’s readings seem to invite us to know the spiritual life, to know what it means to follow the Lord, and also to live that knowledge in our lives. The parable Jesus tells us today is like all of his parables in the sense that he used everyday experiences to communicate a spiritual truth. Today’s lesson is not about the questionable methods of the dishonest steward. No, it’s about recognizing that which is extremely urgent and taking immediate action to correct it. It’s about waking up from our spiritual slumber and coming to spiritual attention.

3). Our challenges from the parable: The Word of God thus challenges us about our relationship with God and with one another. If God is so generous and forgiving to us, we too must be generous and forgiving with one another. We cannot be the disciples of Jesus and think and act merely in terms of the raw justice of the world. None of us could be saved if God applied the strict justice on the basis of our merits. The parable is actually designed to prod at our sense of entitlement and merit. It challenged to think and act in the way that God in Jesus has shown us, which is not a raw justice of the world but the justice of the Kingdom and the very mercy of God.

Let us ask today for a deeper knowledge and understanding of our faith and for the gifts of the Holy Spirit to give us strength to live that knowledge and understanding. Finally, let us “ be prudent” about the use of wealth. Like the steward in the parable, those who would follow Jesus must handle the affairs of temporal life with an eye toward eternal life. Secondly, let us cultivate the virtue of “trustworthiness.” Those who can be trusted in small things can also be trusted in great things. If Christians handle money and other passing things responsibly, then they can also be trusted with the affairs of the Kingdom of God. Finally, God must be center of our life; He must be put ahead of everything. Jesus tells us that no one can serve two masters simultaneously. Let us serve the Lord, and to Him alone. Let us cultivate deeper relationship with Him through our daily prayer life.

Quotes for further reflection:

“Trust your own instinct. Your mistakes might as well be your own, instead of someone else’s.” – Billy Wider

“Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted in important affairs.” – Albert Einstein

“No virtue is more universally accepted as a test of good character than trustworthiness.” – Harry Emerson Fosdick

“Trust is rebuilt by focusing not on what the other person did or did not do but on critiquing one's own behavior, improving one's trustworthiness, and focusing attention not on words and promises but on actions, attitudes, and ways of being.” – Kenneth Coke

“It is better to be a child of God than king of the whole world.” - St. Aloysius Gonzaga

“What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see the misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like.” – St. Augustine

Blessings!
Fr. Raja Selvam