

OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA, MUMBLES
Reflection for
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A), July 26, 2020
(May be used for Home Prayer Service)
Dominican Friars, Swansea

This reflection may be used during the home prayer service. Please see the home prayer service sheet for details.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS OUR INVALUABLE TREASURE

From the moment we became aware of our ability to make decisions, we began to value certain things in life. We place so much importance on these valuables and we do all we can to protect them: spouses, children, work, parish life, vacation and so on. Christ challenges us to even place more importance on the kingdom of God which is eternal, and which is the most important treasure we can imagine.

Knowing the treasure: The treasure which Christ speaks about in the Gospel Reading is the kingdom of God which has come among us in Christ's redemptive mission (cf. Mt 12:28). It will come in him when he returns to take us to his kingdom in heaven. Also, this kingdom comes in him every blessed day in our personal sanctification and spirituality. The kingdom is the eternal life we have been offered in Christ, our Christian faith. It is the life the sacraments of the Church which unites us with heaven. It is the life of witnessing we live in our societies.

Taking the treasure: In the First reading (1 Kings 3:5.7-12), God gave King Solomon a blank cheque. He asked Solomon to make a request of him and he, who can do all things, would grant his request. Solomon did not ask for any earthly blessing nor did he make a request that would benefit him personally as a king. On the contrary, he asked for the wisdom to govern the people of God in truth and justice. He asked for the wisdom to be able to do good and avoid evil. Likewise, God asks us to "ask and it shall be given" (Mt 7:7). What shall we ask for? We pray that his kingdom may come in our world and that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven (Mt 5: 10).

When we communicate with God in prayer, he lovingly asks us to make our requests known to him in confidence. He promises to give us the kingdom which is our treasure. On many occasions, we do not know what to ask but the Spirit of God intercedes for us and directs our minds to desire that invaluable treasure; God's kingdom (Rm 8:26-27). While helping us to pray, Christ, the wisdom of God, taught us to

seek for the kingdom of God and all other things shall be added unto us (Mt 6:33). It is in praying, as Christ has taught us, that we discover the treasure of knowing the kingdom of God. In prayer, we rediscover the treasure which God has given us as gifts.

Guarding the treasure: The First Reading teaches that Solomon considered riches and power to be secondary compared to the treasure of doing God's will. Similarly, Christ likens the kingdom of God to a treasure which is more valuable than every other thing we may possess in life (Mt 13:44-46). With this, he invites us not to let the opportunity which God has given us pass us by. Our life in Christ is the gift which God has given us. While this is a divine gift, it is also a task. It is not enough to be baptised. It is important that we live the life of baptism, life of daily conversion to the Lord.

Sharing the Treasure: Humanly speaking, treasures are guarded and protected from the reach of others. However, the divine treasure is one which is meant to be shared with others. If we have come to know Christ and the power of his love, then we have the vocation to invite others to discover this amazing and precious pearl. Christ who has called us is the Prince of Peace and he invites us to share the peace of his kingdom with others. His invitation to us today is to make sacrifices for others in ensuring their holistic well-being. The 'sharing of this treasure' also involves working for peace and justice in our world.

In this kingdom, we are aware of those who find life difficult to live. Being conscious of their human conditions, we lovingly share in their pain and sorrow. We support them and lift them up in prayer to God. The present time might be difficult, but we are sure that God will transform our sorrow into joy, our pain into praise and our tears into cheers. We put our trust in God who alone can turn every difficult situation into a happy one for those who love him (Rom 8:28). May the transforming power of God lift us out of the difficult conditions of our lives. Amen.