

Two weeks ago, Jesus said to us in the Gospel, “One thing is necessary.” What is the One thing? He is. Christ is the One thing that is important in life. That’s what Paul means when he tells us today, “Seek what is above”, seek Christ. He ends with, “Christ is ALL, and IN all.”

Jesus tells us, [SING] “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” I.e. “Seek me, I am enough!!!”

Today Jesus tells us to “guard against all greed”, of being greedy for things OTHER than the ONE thing, other than Him. Greed distracts us from Christ, and puts us at risk of damaging, or even losing our relationship with Him forever.

So how do we guard against all greed? First, we have to look for the symptoms of greed in our lives. What is greed? St. John Vianney explains that greed is an inordinate, and “fatal love” of the goods of this world. It’s good to love the goods of this world, but not TOO much. What are greed’s symptoms, according to St. John? Greed makes us forget God, prayer, the Sacraments. So we can ask ourselves, am I forgetting the 3 S’s: silence, scripture, sacraments?

Prayer- including these 3 S’s- is a non-negotiable step to guarding against greed. It can sometimes help to actually schedule prayer: to put our daily prayer time in the calendar, and Mass, and Adoration, and Confession, etc.

As part of our prayer time, Scripture helps us guard against greed. Greed is often hidden. Because it is hidden, God knows we need LOTS of warnings about it. The whole bible is filled with warnings against greed. The 9th and 10th commandments are about greed. Jesus preaches about greed and money MUCH more than about, other sins, such as lust, BECAUSE greed is often hidden. So daily Scripture reading and meditation helps us to guard against greed.

Rich Mullins is one of my favorite Christian artists from the 90’s. He wrote a song called One Thing. It’s about guarding against greed. It goes,

[SING] 1. *Everybody I know says they need just one thing*

And what they really mean is that they need just one thing more

Can you relate? I can. Many times I’ve found myself buying things I don’t really need, and end up not using it.

I read a story about a “two-year old girl [who] did not understand what was going on Christmas morning. She only knew that she was awake earlier than her usual time. She stood, bent over with her head resting on the couch, repeating plaintively, “So, so tired ...” Then her father said, “Sweetie, look at this!” The little girl rubbed sleep from her eyes, and looked in amazement at the brightly wrapped package before her. “Mine?,” she asked softly... That process was repeated several times. But something had changed. Within 20 minutes, the little girl had become nearly feral, surrounded by shredded wrapping paper and with scarcely-acknowledged toys at her feet, as she yelled, “MORE MINES! MORE

*MINES!" That's greed."*¹

The rich man in Jesus' parable today is yelling "MORE MINES! MORE MINES!" He is planning to tear down his barns and build bigger ones. He is caught in the addictive cycle, as Bishop Barron says. He was NOT guarding against greed.

In the next verse, Mullins sings,

2. Save me from those things that might distract me

Please take them away and purify my heart

I don't want to lose the eternal for the things that are passing

Mullins is SHOWING us how to pray, how to guard against greed. He is praying that God takes away things that might distract him from the One thing necessary, Christ. When we pray, He gently shows us what is distracting us from him. What is becoming an idol for us, or what is already an idol! Our hidden greed.

Another way to guard against greed and become rich in what matters to God is to look for chances to give away money and stuff. Jesus tells us, "Sell your property and give alms. Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven"

This morning I concelebrated the funeral Mass for our parish family member, Annabelle McEachin. Her son, Fr. Don from Pittsburgh, was the main celebrant. He told about how his parents had six kids. This is a sign of generosity, to be open to a large family, Lord willing. He preached about how his mom and dad scrimped and saved to raise and educate their kids, even budgeting down to the penny, buying second hand furniture, etc. They were guarding against greed by saving their money for their children.

Some people like to go through their closets and give away clothes that they haven't touched in a year. Some like to have garage sales and sell extra stuff for cheap, like some of you did this past Homecoming. I visited a few garage sales and was amazed to find one that had lots of free items, things that didn't even cost a dime! Some like to donate old cars to charity that they aren't using. Some might look for ways to save on bills, such as downgrading their cable TV package, or canceling it, so they can give more to charity. **This week, pray, Lord show me the hidden greed in my life. How are you calling me this week... to guard against greed, and to become rich in what matters to You?**

Announce:

- Thank you for welcoming Fr. Tom last weekend, he wrote to me and told me he enjoyed meeting you. Thank you for generosity to Cross Catholic outreach
- Mass is at St Ignatius tomorrow, July 31, INSTEAD of St. Joseph at 8:30am; breakfast will be served after
- Friday is First Friday All Day Adoration

¹<https://aleteia.org/2019/09/18/the-sin-of-greed-because-the-whole-world-is-not-enough/amp/?fbclid=IwAR2c-QByIKUrIEx1IFwWj8slxILL2DQFKnbzhA2YPxVYO3cddOUkSnV0zx8>

- Birthdays, etc.

Some things to look forward to this year:

- Parish leaders are called to discover God's Vision for Good Shepherd Parish. We are reading the book *Made for Mission* by Tim Glemkowski. Discussing this book will help us to discover God's Vision for us, which will be related to the Catholic Church's overall Vision of moving from "maintenance mode" to "mission mode." In October we'll have a retreat with Don Buchalski, coordinator of evangelization for the diocese, who will help us discuss the book and to discover God's vision for us.
- This year we'll continue monthly youth Masses at St. Columbkille, but new this year is that we'll have one in the fall at St. John's, and one in the spring.
- At all the Masses on the weekend of these youth Masses I will offer a Teaching Mass, explaining WHY we do what we do during the Mass. this is one suggestion by the leaders of the National Eucharistic Revival that began this year.
- Also for the Eucharistic Revival, we will offer the Mass Journals program from Dynamic Catholic. Special journals purchased by a donor will be offered to every parish family member, including young people, to help us to hear God speak one thing to us at every Mass.
- And again for the Eucharistic Revival, I will begin having monthly Eucharistic Holy Hours for Parish Renewal" on First Saturdays. Details will be coming.
- Also, we will reintroduce the Eucharistic cup at Masses this fall.
- This Fall, September 20-21, we will welcome back Richard Lane for a Follow-up Parish Mission.
- In January Fr. John Ricardo and his ACTS XXIX team will be offering a retreat to all priests in our diocese to help us to renew our parishes.