

WSC REFLECTION GUIDE

Readings: Ecc 1:2, 2:21-23
Ps 90:3-6, 12-14, 17
Col 3:1-5, 9-11
Lk 12:13-21

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 1, 2010

Word: **Newness of life in Christ, assures us of heavenly reward.**
Theme: **New Life in Christ is putting to death earthly desire.**
[Dispossession]
Promise: ***“When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory.”*** (Col 3:4)

Reflection:

Our theme for the week is, **“New life in Christ is putting to death our earthly desires.”** The new life in Christ requires us to follow the values of the Kingdom rather than that of the world. In our former way of life, we were deeply immersed in the values of the world. Today, we need to be cut free of these wrongful attachments by ‘putting to death’ our earthly desires.

Both the first reading and the gospel speak about the meaninglessness and vanity of human life without God. A life that seeks only the superficial values of this world cannot truly satisfy. Life is only fulfilling when we can relate meaningfully to others and to God in Christ Jesus. The second reading admonishes us to set our hearts on things above rather than on earthly things.

We should realize that only God meets the deepest longings of our human heart, which is never satisfied by what this world has to offer (Gaudium et Spes 41). Costly goods like cars, houses, television sets, toys, shoes, clothes, bags, jewelries are passing things; we cannot take them with us when we die. Even the loveliest face on earth, the highest honors and positions heaped upon man eventually fade or lose their luster. They cannot satisfy our deepest longing. Only in Christ, with Christ, and for Christ can we find our innermost joy and contentment. We need to empty our hearts and unclutter our life of empty earthly desires, that we may have poverty of heart so Jesus Christ can reside in our hearts. Then we can live the new life of Christ within us.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church exhorts us to have poverty of heart. Jesus said: **“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be,”** (Mt 6:21). Jesus enjoins His disciples to put Him first above everything and everyone else, and bids them **“renounce all that they have”** for His sake and that of the Gospel. Shortly after His passion and death, Jesus gave them the example of the poor widow of Jerusalem who, out of her poverty, gave all that she had to live on. Detachment from earthly riches is a condition for entry into the kingdom of heaven.

All Christ’s faithful are to *“direct their affections rightly, lest they be hindered in their pursuit of perfect charity by the use of worldly things and by adherence to riches which is contrary to the spirit of evangelical poverty.”*

The Beatitude ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit”*** reveals an order of happiness and grace, of beauty and peace. Jesus celebrates the joy of the poor, to whom the Kingdom already belongs. St. Gregory of Nyssa said: “The Word speaks of voluntary humility a “poverty of spirit”; the Apostle Paul gives an example of God’s poverty when he says: ***“for your sake He became poor.”***”

The Lord grieves over the rich, because they find their consolation in the abundance of goods like the rich man in the Gospel. St. Augustine said: *“Let the proud seek and love earthly kingdoms, but blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.”* Abandonment to the providence of the Father in heaven frees us from anxiety about tomorrow, but this doesn’t mean we should sit idly by relying on dole, without using our God-given gifts to fend for ourselves. Trust in God is a preparation for the blessedness of the poor. They shall see God, but reliance on God is not a license for laziness.

Desire for true happiness frees man from his immoderate attachment to the goods of this world so that he can find his fulfillment in the vision and beatitude of God. “The promise of seeing God surpasses all beatitude. In Scripture, to see is to possess...Whoever sees God has obtained all the goods of which he can conceive,” (CCC 2544 – 2548).

When we attain poverty of heart, then we can truly love God with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our strength. We have the peace of Jesus in our hearts. We can live a simple life without clutter and value silence and prayer and freedom from the influences of the world. We can live the fullness of new life in Christ with contentment, joy and good health, which we should share with others. We then reap the promise of the week : ***“When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory,”*** (Col 3:4).

Suggested Personal Reflection Guide:

1. How can I attain poverty of heart?
2. What hinders me from truly living the new life in Christ?

Next Week’s Daily Mass Reading Guide:

Aug 2, 2010 Jer 28:1-17; Ps 119:29, 43, 79, 80, 95, 102; Mt 14:13-21
Aug 3, 2010 Jer 30:1-2, 12-15, 18-22; Ps 102:16-18, 19-21, 29, 22-23; Mt 14:22-36
Aug 4, 2010 Jer 31:1-7; Jer 31:10, 11-12, 13; Mt 15:21-28
Aug 5, 2010 Jer 31:31-34; Ps 51:12-13, 14-15, 18-19; Mt 16:13-23
Aug 6, 2010 Dn 7:9-10, 13-14; Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 9; 2 Pt 1:16-19; Lk 9:28-36
Aug 7, 2010 Hb 1:12- 2:4; Ps 9:8-9, 10-11, 12-13; Mt 17:14-20

“Ignorance of the Bible is ignorance of Christ. Read your Bible daily!”