

Nineteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Luke 12:32-48

Dear Friends,

I get the impression that most people come to worship on Sunday to change God. They have real problems and concerns. They have a plan for what is necessary for them and their loved ones to be happy. They know they need God's help to bring that plan to completion. Therefore, they come to pray and a major part of their prayer is asking God to buy into their plan.

On the other hand, God has a plan also. God wants us to change. God wants us to share in his love for all creation and especially our brothers and sisters in all their human flaws.

In the Gospel today, Luke has the seemingly harsh and unrealistic plea for us to sell our goods and give alms to the poor. This is a theme about property that Luke repeats often in different ways throughout his Gospel.

Luke's point is to put things in perspective. The perspective is that first of all there is more to life than our immediate security and convenience. Secondly, Luke teaches us that God's love for us in God's plan of his Kingdom is our real treasure. When we understand the wonder and beauty of this gracious gift of God revealed in Jesus and his teaching on the Kingdom, we then are able to put both our worries and possessions in perspective. This is how God wants us to change and to grow. We need to learn that God has a better plan than our plan. The message of the Gospel tells us to see our life and our possessions in light of God's Kingdom that is taking place now. We share in that Kingdom when we walk with Jesus in love. This love will carry us beyond our mortality to life beyond death.

When we put Jesus' words in this context, they do not seem so harsh and unrealistic.

“Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom. Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy.” (Luke 12:32-33)

God has a plan. It is the Kingdom. We are invited to buy in. That is how God wants us to change. That is what it means when we say. “Let go and let God.”