

25 Sunday Ordinary Time C 2016

September 17-18

Fraze and Callaway

I visited with parents on the day their first born left for college. Sending her to college was bitter sweet; sweet because they were proud to have her continue her education, bitter because they couldn't afford to send her to their first-choice school. To quote the dad, "I hope God forgives me for not supporting my family as I should."

I trust God did not make a mistake when he gave that daughter to those parents. They gave her life and love, faith and courage, and they gave her a simple heart. Everything that money cannot buy they have given her in abundance. They have been fine stewards of God's greater gifts.

Parents, if you had riches beyond measure you would spend them on your children. Some of you ache for what you cannot give them. Some of you still feel guilt even though your children have been on their own for many years. Perhaps at the end of life you agonize because you have nothing much for them to even inherit. Today we remember that money isn't everything. In fact, in light of faith and eternity, money isn't anything.

The prophet Amos tells us that God has a long memory, remembering especially our treatment of the poor. In the reading (8:4-7) supposedly religious people are eager for the Sabbath to be over so that they can return to their market stores and cheat their customers. They wait for the Lord's Day to end so that they can overcharge for wheat and flour. The poor, the people who had little to live on, would be cheated out of the little they had. "The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Never will I forget the things they have done!" (8:7)

Every little boy is poor if his parents do not give him the riches of faith. Every little girl is underprivileged if her parents withhold from her the good news of Jesus Christ. You who want to give your children more, what they have is enough and what they need is priceless. In light of God's greater gifts, the rest of what you want for them doesn't matter so much.

The gospel (Luke 16:1-13) brings these truths into the sharpest focus, "No servant can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

Parents, you are the first and most powerful teachers of your children. Everything you do teaches your children something about God. If you agonize over and talk about and hope to get more money and seldom agonize about morality or talk about Jesus or give to charity, then no matter what your intention, you are revealing your master. No matter what your home is lacking, there is

something you can do for the poorest of the poor. To our benefit or to our detriment, God always remembers how we treat His little ones; God never forgets our treatment of children and the poor.

Everything I just said to parents, I say to all. God remembers what we do, good or evil. We cannot serve two masters. I conclude with the antiphon for today's gospel acclamation, "Though our Lord Jesus Christ was rich, he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich."