

Sunday 25th C September 18, 2022

Recently the Holy Father called on the new bishop to “Tend to the flock of God that is in your charge.” May these words of St. Peter be carved in the heart! “We are called and made shepherds not by ourselves, but by the Lord, and not to serve ourselves, but rather to serve the flock entrusted to our care, to serve to the extent of offering our lives, like Christ, the Good Shepherd,” the Pope said.

Today’s readings remind us to be faithful stewards to God. God has chosen us to be faithful in words and deeds in our lives.

The prophet Amos, in the first reading, reminds the Israelites to be faithful to their Covenant with God by practicing justice and mercy as God’s faithful stewards. What did Amos mean? In those days the businessmen had wrong ideas in their minds. They might get more time to make profits by their dishonest business practices like charging high prices, using false weights and measures, and selling poor quality merchandise.

Hence, Amos prophesied and warned them that God would not tolerate the abuse of the weak.

In the gospel Jesus challenges, us to use our blessings -- time, talents, health and wealth -- wisely and shrewdly, so that they will serve for our good in eternity. We are on the right road only if we use our earthly wealth to attain our heavenly goal.

The steward acted prudently when his master asked about his dishonesty with his people. The steward knew that when his master fired him, he would need friends. His dishonest plan would serve two purposes. First, the debtors would be grateful to him and would support him financially. Second, he would be in a position to exercise a little judicious blackmail to silence them

Christians must give as much attention to things that concern their souls as they do to the things that concern worldly matters.

1. Invest temporal goods to acquire eternal welfare. Jesus reminds us that earthly resources will eventually run out. Hence, our material possessions should be used for the good of others. A man's true wealth consists, not in what he owns, but in what he gives away. The right use of wealth, according to Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, is to help the poor, the hungry, and the starving.

2. Integrity and fidelity are the true yardsticks for promotion and eternal reward. A man's way of fulfilling a small task is the best proof of his fitness or unfitness to be entrusted with a larger task. No man will be advanced to a higher office until he has given proof of his honesty and ability in a lower position. Jesus extends this principle to eternity. He calls us to faithfulness in little things because most of our life is made up of seemingly small opportunities to do good. Few of us can hope to "save the world." Still, we can conduct our business honestly, tutor a child, visit a person in a nursing home, or help a neighbor in distress and make a difference in his or her life. Then our Lord will welcome us with the words:

*"Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy."* (Mt. 25:21). Our heavenly destiny depends on how we use the things of earth.

3. "No servant can serve two masters" (Luke 16:13). As Christians, we are called to serve God first. We must not use money and possessions exclusively to serve our own purposes. Let us remember the proverb, "Money can buy everything but not true happiness, and it can purchase a ticket to every place except to heaven."