

Mt 13:44-52; 1 Kgs 3:5, 7-12; Rom 8:28-30 Sacrifice Everything

There will be good days. There will be bad days. But don't delay. Starting today, sacrifice everything for the Kingdom of Heaven!

The farmer did. The Kingdom of heaven is like treasure buried in a field. Surprised and full of joy he sells all that he has and buys that field (Mt 13:44).

The Jeweler did. The Kingdom of heaven is like merchant searching for fine pearls. Finding a pearl of great price, he sells all that he has and buys it (Mt 13:45-46).

But how easily we can be led astray...searching for happiness in all the wrong places: like material wealth, human wisdom, worldly power and honor, human love, pleasure and false religions—that will never satisfy.

But God Himself will set me free from the hunter's snare! (Ps 91:3). God Himself will guide us to the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price. It's up there on that cross!

*Jesus Christ, who though he was in the form of God...emptied himself...coming in human likeness...he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross (Phil 2:6-8)...for our salvation!*

Because only Jesus Christ will bring us true joy and happiness, peace and endurance in times of trial, the power to overcome sin and temptation. And lead us into everlasting life in heaven!

But the cost is high and the climb is steep: *Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me* (Mt 16:24).

We must be willing to sacrifice everything—just like He did—for the Kingdom of Heaven.

When Jesus called the first disciples, Peter, Andrew, James and John, from their boats, they left everything and followed Jesus.

We too, must set our hearts on Jesus. Jesus always comes first (Mt 10:37-38). That means, we must become detached—die to our selfish desires and rise to a new life in Jesus Christ.

Look, it's ok to have possessions and to enjoy life. But we must use what God has given us do His will and thereby give glory to God.

How? Let us pray for the wisdom of God. Like King Solomon in the first reading. God appears in a dream and says, *Ask something of me [anything] and I will give it to you* (1 Kgs 3:5).

Do you remember what King Solomon says? *Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong* (1 Kgs 3:9).

God was so impressed that Solomon did not ask for something selfish but instead asked for the wisdom to help others, that God gives him what he asked for:

*I give you a heart so wise and understanding that ... no one [will] equal you* (1 Kgs 3:11).

Let us receive the wisdom of God and all His love in the Holy Eucharist when we put Jesus Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, with all His love and compassion, power and glory, into our hearts.

Let us receive the wisdom of God and all His mercy when we confess our sins with a sorrowful heart...

like St. Peter who wept bitterly after denying Jesus three times and Jesus forgave him.

Then make the effort. Because like the second reading says: God knew you before you were born...God chose you...

and God “predestined [you] to be conformed to the image of his Son” Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29).

So, trust in God's plan even when it is difficult to understand. Because God works for the good of those who love Him (Rom 8:28).

How do we love Him? Consider the parable of the dragnet: The Kingdom is like a net thrown into the sea that catches fish of every kind (Mt 13:47).

That is our vocation. Our mission is to help our brothers and sisters—the good fish and even the rotten fish.

Because like Jesus: we have not been sent into this world to be served but to serve and to give our lives as ransom for many (Mt 20:28).

Ransom? In what way? Let's share what He has given us...so they can find true freedom—in the hidden treasure and pearl of great price which is Jesus Christ.

We call that the 3 T's. Share your Time, Talent, and Treasure. Give to the needy. Comfort the lonely. Bear wrongs patiently. Forgive all injuries...

Free your heart from hatred. Free your mind from worrying by putting everything into the hands of Jesus Christ. Expect less. Give more. And pray for everyone.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, we have found the hidden treasure and pearl of great price...and it is You living in us.

Help us, guide us, empower us and conform us into You by sacrificing everything we have for the Kingdom of Heaven!