**ORDINARY TIME 18 C Lectionary Catechesis**

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**Guardian Angels Parish in Mead, CO**

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| The disciple reconsiders the things of earth in light of the things of heaven because of the encounter with Christ. The heavenly treasure, which is the kingdom of God, is one of the main points of these readings that work so well together. The readings challenge to re-evaluate our lives in the light of Christ and his kingdom. Clarifying the meaning of heavenly treasure up against the shortness of life deepens our discipeship. Another theme is all about dying and rising with Christ, the Paschal Mystery. |

**FIRST READING: Ecclesiastes 1, 2; 2, 21-23**

The name of the unusual book in the Old Testament means “a person who assembles or calls (the people”, the same as its Hebrew name, Qoheleth. The first word, vanity, is difficult to translate into English; it has as much the sense of “emptiness” or a “mere mist in the air,” or “futility.” In the first verse, the word is repeated five times. The author confronts our sense of purpose here on earth especially in our pre-occupied anxiety over earthly things over which we really have no control, and yet we think that we do. He especially assaults the heart in its excessive concern with fears of every kind. One of the things many people desire is legacy; even this is vanity, according to Qoheleth. None of these anxieties will be considered in the moment of God’s judgment.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What should be the central pre-occupation of the human person as you read this?  Why did God make us? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What are the vanities of our times and in our culture?  What are the pre-occupations of life for you at this time? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | What will be your legacy?  What does Qoheleth say are the important things in life |
| **WORSHIP** | Whose work is the focus and foundation of the Eucharist? Why must this be true?  “Liturgy” means literally the work of the people. What is your “work” during the Eucharistic Liturgy? |

**First Reading**

**RESPONSORIAL: Ps 90, 3-4. 5-6. 12-13. 14. 17**

Our responsorial continues from the first reading the theme of our human frailty in light of God’s existence. Everything earthly and visible passes away. For some this is all very depressing, and yet it certainly reminds us of our place in the greater scheme of things. Vs. 12 here may be the most significant: “Teach us to count our days aright, that we may gain wisdom of heart.” It is this formation and education of the human heart that has been pre-occupying the gospel for several weeks now; the maturation of our consciences, and the CCC has sound teachings to remind us. The education of the heart is overlooked to our peril. This work is accomplished through prayer, training in the school of the gospels, and in works of mercy, according this psalm. The work of our hands we pray is prospered by God is just this, not the physical stuff we do to increase our own pleasure and ease and ensure our life styles.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | This earth and indeed all visible things are always passing away at every moment. How does the Church promote this teaching and observation?  It is not really so much God returning to us, but rather we returning to God. What are the things the petitioner needs from God listed in this passage? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What does it mean for you to “number your days aright”?  Life is short. What’s in your bucket list of things to do and see? Then, what’s in your spiritual bucket? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | The psalmist establishes a tone of urgency by asking “Return, O Lord, how long?” What is the urgency in evangelization?    What place does evangelization have as the work of our hands? |
| **WORSHIP** | Prayer includes an examination of conscience, to gain “wisdom of heart”. How does this for you or what helps you do this?  The psalmist tells us that worship is to return to God with “shouts of joy and gladness”. Do you feel like that at Sunday liturgy or are you depressed and grumpy? |

**Responsorial Psalm**

**SECOND READING: Colossians 3, 1-5. 9-11**

Cosmology of above and below continues throughout this letter, and here in this portion more so than usual. Both thinking about and seeking “what is above.” Although this passage does not specifically name the “things above,” the things above a surely opposite the earthly evils on Paul’s short list. But more than just focusing on that, the things above include are share in the glory of Christ, a renewal of the whole self, life in the full image of God, living in the fullness of Christ “all in all”, and an end to meaningless earthly distinctions of race, language, or culture. Vs. 12 right after this passage has the opposite from the list of evils in Vs. 3. Paul lists the things above. Please look into this, as it truly fits the demands of our times. The list reflects the fruits of the Holy Spirit (there are nine items here, too), and are meant to be manifested in specific behaviors of the disciple. Curiously this list is in reverse order of qualities.

**Vs. 1: CCC 1002** Christ will raise us on the last day, and in some sense we are already raised up in Him. The fully Christian “participates” in the life of Christ.

**Vs. 3: CCC 665, 1003, 1420, 2796** First is a summary statement about the Ascension’s meaning for us. Our life in Christ is “hidden” until the end; only at the Eucharist does this life begin to show itself forth for us. The human person receives the new life in Christ at Baptism. While subject still to suffering and death, we await our share of heavenly glory. This share can be lost by sin. The Our Father expresses the spiritual reality that already in some unique way belong to God as God’s children, awaiting His kingdom’s full manifestation.

**Vs. 4: CCC 1971** Our life in Christ is filled with the fruits of the Holy Spirit; the virtues arise from a life of faith. “This catechesis teaches us to deal with cases of conscience in the light of our relationship to Christ and to the Church.”

**Vss. 1-3: CCC 655** The Paschal Mystery both closes off our sinful past and opens for us a new future. Now Christ lives in the hearts of the faithful. We “no longer live for ourselves but for Christ.”

**Vss. 3-8: CCC 1852** Our passage is one of seven times that Paul lists sins. In the CCC citation they are collated for us.

**Vs. 5: CCC 2518** A comment here on the sixth beatitude, the pure in heart, discuss how the disciple connects purity of heart, of body and of faith.

**Vs. 10: CCC 2809** God’s name and being are holy, and this holiness is God’s glory, and God reveals that holiness in creating us, in Christ His Son, and in Scripture, and finally in restoring us to God’s holiness through redemption and reconciliation.

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | Share your thoughts on Paul’s argument that the things above are superior to the things below, and the rationale that can be given for this aspect of our faith.  What does the Resurrection mean to you? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | Reflect on the sixth beatitude, purity of heart.  What does holiness look like in your life? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | To whom is the mission of the Church proclaim? Or to put it in an other way, how can we work together that the Church holds every diversity in esteem?  How can catechize with a focus on the Paschal Mystery in this culture? |
| **WORSHIP** | What is the Paschal Mystery?  Consider the teaching that Baptism is a dying with Christ to rise with Christ. |

**Second Reading**

**GOSPEL: Luke 12, 13-21 Settling an Inheritance and Parable of the Rich Man’s Harvest**

Perhaps this is the incident from which Pope Francis took one of his signature responses: “Why am I to judge?” Jesus’ opening and closing lines about greed bookends the parable he gives about the reign of God. The Bountiful Harvest provides a thought-provoking re-consideration of wealth that both answers the petitioner’s immediate question about his inheritance and about a further explanation as to what “heavenly treasure” means. In our own culture today, as baby boomers (by far the largest age group in the nation) shuffle on out in the next twenty years, there will be the greatest handing over of wealth in American history. The greedy will spend it frivolously, much like studies have shown that people wind up more destitute after a major lottery win. In America, more is always bigger! Resources waste plagues us; a prime example is food waste in this county. Our garages are so full there’s no room to park are cars in them. Within the parable, Jesus’ ending comment returns to the theme, ever so subtly about inheritance. He’s very pointed here. He swiftly moved the man with an inheritance reception to a man who then in turn has to give a bequest of his wealth in an inheritance.

**Vs. 13: CCC 549** The preaching of Jesus in his public life is “The Kingdom of God is at hand.” The exorcisms of Jesus prefigure the coming of the kingdom at which Satan will be cast out and defeated. The “ruler of the world” is finished. *Regnavit a ligno Deus.*

**Vs. 14; CCC 549 See above.**

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| **KNOW YOUR**  **FAITH** | What does it mean to say, “The Kingdom of God is at hand”?  What is the word for the inheritance that the Church herself has received and will be responsible to hand on? |
| **LIVE YOUR**  **FAITH** | What is it about your life that matters to God, who is not concerned with your financial status?  If you’ve received an inheritance, can you share what you did with it? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Share your thoughts on how and why greed destroys personal relationships.  We are definitely a culture that likes to “eat, drink, and be merry.” Some on the other hand suggest that the disciple must be scrupulously sober and temperate in all things. Where does the Church stand on these matters? |
| **WORSHIP** | In what can the Eucharist be considered our greatest treasure while here on earth?  When we come to Eucharist, we bring our treasure with us to give to God. How is your personal going for you? |

**Gospel**

**Next Sunday: OT 19 C: Wisdom 18, 6-9; Psalm 33; Hebrews 11, 1-2. 8-19; Luke 12, 32-48**