

## **FILL THE BARNS OF OUR HEARTS WITH FAITH**

Today's parable (Lk 12:13-21) offers a vivid portrayal of people whose lives revolve entirely around themselves. We hear about the rich man in the parable who is a wealthy man and grows even wealthier after an exceptional harvest. He asks an important question: "What shall I do now?" But the answer he gives is entirely self-serving. Rather than considering others or giving thanks, he decides to tear down his existing barns, which were already sufficient, and greedily build larger ones to hoard his surplus, in order to satisfy his own needs. His focus is entirely on possession and preservation. Everything is centred on himself in the language he uses, "my crops, my barns, my grain, my goods, my soul". What he fails to understand is that his soul was never his to begin with. It belonged to God, and when God called him home, he had nothing lasting to offer, only stored-up goods and selfish plans. Jesus tells us this story as a caution against avarice (greed) and the illusion that our security lies in our earthly possessions. Jesus teaches that real security comes from listening to His words and acting on them. The rich man in today's parable cannot get enough, he's very successful and wants even more, but is unable to see his impending death, when he will have to give an account of himself to God.

## **BE CONCERNED ABOUT HEAVENLY INHERITANCE**

A man in the crowd asked Jesus to tell his greedy brother to give him a share of the family inheritance. Jesus explains that He does not judge over earthly inheritance, because, His only concern is to prepare us to claim the eternal inheritance in heaven. In today's Gospel the barns symbolise our lives and our bodies, which are temples to store up our faith now, and in the future. Jesus is asking us to fill them (souls) up to the brim, with an everlasting harvest of spiritual wealth and holiness and not a corrupt harvest of sin. It is this holy harvest that will yield the fruits of eternal life. We should store the richness of His divine presence in our bodies, minds, souls and hearts, by always exercising faith, with love and mercy towards each other. Jesus was not giving-out about the man's business talent, but was critical of his vanity, greed and selfishness, which became obstacles in doing God's divine will. We must be careful that greed (avarice) does not take-over our whole nature. The rich man had lost the capacity to be concerned for others. His life was consumed with his earthly possessions. He was rich in sin and not holiness. His only interest was in himself. Jesus uses this moment to teach us a lesson about what truly constitutes wealth and security. While we naturally seek financial stability, Jesus reminds us that we must also strive to be rich in the eyes of God, because our ultimate security lies in Him, who will secure us the inheritance of eternal life. To be rich in God's sight involves being generous with what we have been given.

## **FOOL!**

Jesus calls him a "fool" for he is rich towards himself but mean towards God. He gives himself everything and gives God nothing and by extension his neighbour. We can all help out our neighbour from our own resources, be it our time, money as we are able, a kind word, a helping hand or some type of good deed. The man in today's Gospel is rich only to himself but poor towards God and his neighbours in need. This parable reminds us of the foolishness in over-indulging in worldly things, because they will not get us into heaven. We must never forget the worth of our souls and the importance of eternity.

## **DAY OF JUDGEMENT**

Our soul is immortal (never dies after death) and is accountable to Jesus, on the Day of Judgement. On this day, we must ensure now that our soul will be filled with heavenly things (Col 3:1-5. 9-11). The man was a fool in the eyes of God, because he made no other use of his wealth, other than to keep it all for himself. He thought he had plenty of time to indulge in the pleasures of worldly things and satisfy his sensual appetites. But God had other plans for his retirement. He should have shared his wealth by helping others. Jesus is preparing us all for our Day of Judgement, which we cannot avoid. On this day, it will be revealed to us, how Jesus' hidden presence, was always dwelling in our hearts and souls here on earth. That our bodies were and are living tabernacles hosting our Creator. St. Paul teaches us that if we fill our souls (barns) on earth with, pride, vanity, fornication, impurity, guilty passions, deceit, evil desires and especially greed (avarice), then we are worshipping false gods, and misusing our soul to store up the wrong things. It is not what we own here on earth that will qualify our entry into heaven, but what we do not own, because we shared our wealth and time with the needy. God bless. Fr. Brendan.