

32ND Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 8, 2009

Fr. Larry Richards

Good morning! Yesterday I had a wedding for one of our parishioners out at North East, out at St. Gregory's. And as I was at the wedding as always I am always you know 50%, 60% maybe 70% of the people that go to weddings now a days are pagans. Right? They don't go to church most of the time and they go to the wedding most of the time because they want to be nice to the couple and they want some good drinks afterwards at the reception. And so I always use weddings and funerals as a time of evangelization. And again as we sit there and we deal with that reality my thought is to try and get everybody in that congregation to at least open their hearts to the reality of Christ. And often like I did yesterday, we sat there and said listen it isn't enough to know that God loves you. The devil knows that God loves him, so what? You need to respond to that love. And today at this Mass, as I was saying last night and I say here all the time, what will it cost Jesus to have this Mass for us? Everything, His whole life. He holds nothing back. He gives everything. And so again if we are going to enter into a relationship with Jesus it must cost us everything. Not part of our life, not a portion of our life, not some of our life. It must cost us all of our life. If two people are going to get married they give their lives to each other. If we are going to enter into a relationship we must give everything to our Lord, Jesus Christ. That is what the first reading is about and what the Gospel is about. People giving everything. Can you imagine, here is the prophet and he runs into this widow and her son and says, "Give me something to eat." And she says, "Okay but after this we are going to die because this is it." But she is willing to give everything for this prophet. And instead of the prophet saying "Oh no, no, no. Here put yourself first," the prophet says, "Yes give me that food." Oh could you imagine if I went to someone's house and there is nothing left and I sat there and they say, "We have nothing left we are going to starve." Well give it to me to me first and if there is anything left you can have some." Think about the reality of this first reading but she is a woman of generosity. She gives everything. She is giving her life and the life of her son. And the prophet says, "God will bless you. You will never run out of food now." And it happened to be true because God is God.

The same with the Gospel; here are the people they come and they give. You know if we are blessed abundantly we give some of our money and some of this and we do well. And then Jesus is looking at all these people and He is not impressed with any of them except for the one. And the one woman who goes and takes 2 cents, a few cents it says, a few small coins, and she takes her 2 cents worth and she gives it. And Jesus stops and says, "This woman gave more than anything because this woman gave everything." And so what the call today for you and me is, is to give everything to our Lord and God. He doesn't want part of your life, He doesn't want you at Mass for an hour on Sunday, He wants everything. And we make that real by focusing primarily on three things or you could say four.

The first thing is God Lord of my time? Is God Lord of my money? Is God the Lord of my talents? And is He the Lord of my life when it comes down to it. Let's first look at the time. You know again when it comes to our time our whole life must be God's. When I go to work, you know do you go to work to make money for yourself to live or do you go to work for God's glory? What is your time? You know last night one of my kids who hasn't been to church in awhile, he was at Mass. He is always giving me excuses why he is not at Mass. I am sure everybody here goes to Mass every week but do you know there are people that don't? Really, even our parishioners don't go every week. You know they just fit us in. "I am so busy Father. Oh when I get a chance." And this one particular kid loves in the winter time, he is a pagan, to go ice fishing. So let's see ice fishing or Mass? Ice fishing or Mass? Ice fishing always works. And so I used that on him just to pound it into him. I am one of those types that if I see you here I like to make a little jab every once in awhile. The reality is what is more important in your life? God or whatever you fill in the blank with be it golf, be it work, be it money, be it this – what do you fill your life with? Or would you never miss if you were going to die because God is your life. Or is He to you, "Well if I have a chance I'll go if it is not to inconvenient for me. You know life is all about me." Really? Does your time belong to God? And if you say, "Oh yes Father." Can you prove that? Don't just say it. How do you prove it? Would you never miss Mass because God is the most important thing in your week? So of course you would never miss Mass, ever because what else is more important than God? And if you don't go to Mass then you are saying that is more important than God. That's ultimately what it comes down to. And that is why if you miss Mass on Sunday, what kind of

sin is it - mortal sin. You die after missing Mass on purpose what happens? You go to hell. Do not pass go. "Well I think God loves me." I know He loves you. But again as I have said a thousand times, at the end of your life He looks at you and says "Okay, I will give you what you want and it sure wasn't Me. You didn't want to be with Me once a week. Life was too busy for you. I won't give you Myself forever. I would never force Myself on you. I will give you what you want. And let's be real, it wasn't Me." So is God the Lord of your time? Do you give God quality time everyday in prayer? Just do you? Is God in charge of every moment of your day? Is what everything you and I do for His glory or is it for our glory? So, the first thing He wants is everything and it begins with our time.

The second thing of course He wants is our money. Now again, I don't like to focus on money, I don't care what you do with your money. This isn't between you and me. I don't ever look, as I have said a thousand times, what anybody gives in this parish, I don't care. Never have, never will. This is God's parish and this is between you and Him. And as I tell you when you join this parish, I don't care if you never give a dime to the parish. Well I do but,... How much of your money belongs to God? All of it! Every single dime you have. And so then God says, "I want you to tithe." That means you give 10% back to Him however that works. Whether you give it to the church, whether you give it to the poor, whether you take care of an orphan in India, whatever you do, as long as you make sure that God is in charge of your money. And again, is He in reality? If you and I don't tithe of course we steal from God because He says, "it is all mine. You give me 10% off the top before taxes and I'll sit there and I will bless you and let you have 90% and I will bless you all the more." And we sit there and we think, "Awe come on Father." Again, I don't care. I am just telling you what God says. I am just telling you that when He looked at that woman today, she wasn't giving 10%, she was giving everything. Is God in charge of your money? Whatever you decide to do with your money is that a prayed over decision? Do you say, "God this is all yours, every dime. What do You want me to do with it? Tell me and I will do it. Don't sit there and try, "Well God this is how much I get. Let's see how much I'll give You this month." Is God in charge of your money? Does He take first priority, however that has worked out.

Lastly, is God in charge of your talents? Again I have talked about many times of course throughout the years, every talent that you and I have been given, has been given for the building up of the body, to build God's kingdom not our own. So again, what that means very generally is that every talent that you have been given is to build up the Body of Christ. So let's think of your talents. Whatever talent you have, whether it is to make money; whether it is to be a carpenter, whether it is to be a painter, which we will talk about later, whether it's to be a lover, whatever it is, do you do it for God? Or do you do it for yourself; and for your money; and for your family; and so I can have two cars; and so I can have a boat; and so I can have this. Is that what you do it for? Do we use what we have for ourselves or are we building up the body? Every talent you have. Like for our choir, been asking for like the last how many weeks, sing for the choir. If you can sing then you need to sing for God instead of sing for you. The talent wasn't given to you for you, it was to build up the body. So you want to go up here and sign up and say, "Hey, I want to be a singer." If you can play guitar, if you can play piano you do it for God. You don't say, well I like to do it but not do it for church. Why not? That is why God gave you that talent. So why are you wasting it on yourself? Father! Are you giving everything to God is what it is ultimately about. Am I giving everything to God?

So this homily is really to sit back and reflect on our lives. Am I one of the ones who just give a little? Or am I one of the woman or women in the Old and New Testament today that give it all? Today at this Mass, God will give it all. And if we are truly enter into a relationship we have got to give it all back. Our whole self back to Him the way a marriage is. It is that simple. 100% and 100% gift of life to each other. But know this people – every time you give God will bless you even more abundantly. So don't just focus on well it will cost me everything. Focus on, well if it cost me everything I will gain eternal life. I'll get everything. So it is a matter of trust. Are you living for yourself and trusting yourself or are you living for God and trusting in God?

May each of you know His love today and forever, amen.

