



# 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ord. Time, Yr B

## Lectio Divina

**Lectio:** Mark continues to present his grouping of Jesus' teachings that prepare new converts (in the guise of his disciples) who are (seeking) to join/be the Church. Mark has Jesus present five catechetical teachings.<sup>1</sup> Jesus' teachings are: ①The Exorcist: there will be workers other than those in their group (the Church), Mk 9:38-41; ②A Group of Sayings: the death-bringing power of sin and the need to be authentic believers, Mk 9:42-50; ③Marriage and Divorce: love is faithful, Mk 10:1-12; ④Jesus and the Children: have a profound trust in God, Mk 10:13-16, and our text, ⑤On Riches and Earthly Ties: eternal life is a gift not earned nor bought, Mk 10: 17-31.

Jesus in his teachings, is preparing the Twelve, as well as the people, to understand the way of the Cross. He also has to teach them that in him is a new way to eternal life. They practiced the way of keeping the Commandments. But that way does not earn salvation but keeps you from evil ways. Evil brings death, not eternal life. So Jesus presents a new way –belief in him. This way opens to you the free gift of eternal life while the Commandments still keep you from evil ways

► So, our text, the last of these five teachings, has a rich young man approach Jesus with a question about earning eternal life. Before Jesus resumes his journey to Jerusalem and his Cross, he must pause to answer the man. The people still think they have to pay for eternal life; the payment being, keeping the Commandments. Peter (representing the disciples) follows up with his own question about reward for giving up to follow Jesus. Also the disciples have not yet come to understand Jesus' ways and his teachings. Will they understand by the time he takes up his Cross?<sup>2</sup> Will the people, especially the rich, understand?

**Read:** Mark 10: 17 – 30 (Shorter form Mk 10:17-27)

**Meditatio:** Have I had to change my plans to see to someone else's need? How open am I to make time to help others? Do I think I have to earn eternal life? Am I willing to admit that I am 'thirsting' for God? Do name it, that I want a good relationship with Jesus? Am I aware of my mortality? Do I long for eternal life? Do I keep all the Commandments? Do I allow myself 'little sins' e.g. not killing but eating unhealthily, not committing adultery but ignoring some commitments, honouring parents but seldom thanking them, etc.? Could I look Jesus in the eye? Can I be loved by Jesus despite all my failings? Do I think I can hide things from Jesus? How much do I find my security in money and/or possessions? Do I follow Jesus as long as it fits into my plans? What have I given away so that I can follow Jesus? How important to me is having a relationship with Jesus? Do I look on my good fortune as a blessing from God? Do I not associate with those who have less than me? Do I look at Jesus on the Cross as a failure or as a victor? Is my heart rich in love? Do I take the risk to share my wealth with the poor and needy? Can I see the needs of others while I have more than enough? Can I see my own needs? Do I understand that Jesus has saved me? How do I respond to the free gift of salvation? Am I sure of God's reward for all I have given up to follow Jesus? Do I think it is worth following Jesus?

**Oratio:** Pray that we be generous in helping those who have less than we have. Pray in thanks for the free gift of salvation that opens for us the way to eternal life. Pray that we will live by the way of love and so live within the full breadth of the Commandments. Pray that the Lord can look upon us and our lives and love us. Pray that love of Jesus will fill our lives and not lusting for wealth. Pray that we will use our wealth responsibly. Pray that our sacrifices for the kingdom will bring us friendships, happiness and human fulfilment. Pray that family ties will not hold us back from following Jesus. Pray for people in religious orders who have taken the vow of poverty. Pray that our thirst for God will be satisfied in eternal life with God.

**Contemplatio** – Dwell in stillness, simply aware of the boundless expanse of mercy that surrounds you.

**After your prayer** – Be generous in helping those who have less than you. ✍ Fr Joe

## **Mark 10: 17 – 30 (Shorter form Mk 10:17-27)**

(Shorter form in bold)

Jesus was setting out on a Journey when a man ran up, knelt before him and put this question to him, ‘Good master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments. You must not kill; You must not commit adultery; You must not steal; You must not bring false witness; You must not defraud; Honour your father and mother.’ And he said to him, ‘Master, I have kept all these from my earliest days.’ Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and he said, ‘There is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come follow me.’ But his face fell at these words and he went away sad, for he was a man of great wealth.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus looked round and said to his disciples, ‘How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!’ They were astounded at these words, but Jesus insisted, ‘My children,’<sup>4</sup> he said to them, ‘how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ They were more astonished than ever. ‘In that case’ they said to one another ‘who can be saved?’ Jesus gazed at them. ‘For men’ he said ‘it is impossible, but not for God: because everything is possible for God.’

Peter took this up. ‘What about us?’ he asked him. ‘We have left everything and followed you.’ Jesus said, ‘I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and land – not without persecutions – now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Details are found in the Jerome Biblical Commentary © 1968 Prentice-Hall, 42: 59-62

<sup>2</sup> Jesus was powerless on the Cross; he had no earthly ties, riches or authority – he trusted completely in his Father. If we are to be Jesus’ followers we must take up our crosses with no reliance on earthly ties but trust in God alone. Jesus was ‘rewarded’, so to speak, with God the Father’s gift of resurrection. We will ‘be rewarded’ i.e. be gifted with eternal life.

<sup>3</sup> “*In the Old Testament, wealth was never condemned provided that it was shared. Moreover, it was considered as a sign that a person knew how to direct his life well and that God had blessed him.*” Quoted from footnote to Mk 10:13 of Christian Community Bible, pastoral edn 1988. So we might understand the man’s dilemma and his question.

<sup>4</sup> Mark has named ‘children’ in 3 senses in these 5 catechetical teachings viz: new converts, dependants and here, as his feeble believers.