

8th Sunday of the year, A Cycle homily 2-26-16

No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Have you heard about the new building in Downtown Detroit? New building on the old Hudson's site on Woodward. It will be 734 feet tall. The tallest building in the city.

We are going to conduct a little local geography test.

Can anyone tell me what are the other five tallest buildings downtown (Dialogue with them on the following information)

727 feet Detroit Marriot Hotel

619 feet One Detroit Center (next to the City-County building)

565 feet Penobscot Building

522 feet the four Renaissance Center towers

496 feet Guardian Building

All the tallest buildings are either exclusive office buildings or expensive living spaces. Someone has invested a lot of money in them.

Have you ever noticed that there are a number of churches in downtown Detroit but, compared to the really big buildings, none of them really stand out. It was different one hundred years ago. Then church buildings soared on the Detroit landscape. Just think of the great cities of Europe. The cathedrals dominated the landscape. Civic life revolved around the churches: music, dance, financing, education. Great plazas.

Church life is still strong in many small towns in America today, but they are quickly disappearing as central structures in our daily lives. Today it is not the church, but our secular world is dominating our lives. The secular world is where people are investing their time and fortune.

Where do young people want to live today? Downtown Detroit. The only thing that stops most of them from moving there is that it is too expensive. You need money...lots of money to be a "success" in our modern world.

Young man from our parish moved downtown a few years ago; had to move to Southfield because he could not afford it because of the increase of rent for his apartment. Americans are chasing their

dreams. Our dreams are often being set, consciously or unconsciously, by our secular world.

And that is where Jesus' words in today's gospel speak boldly to us. No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

And what does our modern world tell us to worry about? Do we have enough money to eat well, dress well and live well. Do we have a big enough house and a large amount of savings for retirement? Many of us are stressed out, working two jobs, no time for our children, no time to rest, no time to go to church let alone volunteer at church or have the funds to support our faith communities.

Everyone knows we need enough money to eat and to clothe ourselves and to have shelter. But the draw of our secular society is to get more and bigger and the finest of everything. Then when we begin to get those things, we wonder how we can sustain such a lifestyle for ourselves and our children.

We get sick, exhausted, worn out with no time for family, God, faith community or leisure. Surely no time for spending time with our child preparing them for first communion and confirmation, no time for Generations of Faith sessions, no time to join an Emmaus faith-sharing group during Lent, no time for family prayer, no time to reach out to those in need.

***Story about going to Sam's on Sunday. (It seemed like Friday night!)**

In today's gospel Jesus presents us with two views of how we look at money in our lives.

The first view is that when it comes to wealth, everything depends on me! (please repeat that) Everything depends on me. Jesus says, when we live as if everything depends on me, we experience great anxiety. What are we to eat, or what are we to drink or what are we to wear? Our whole lives is dominated by how we can make more and more money. Sure, we need resources for food and clothing and housing.

But when more and more of our lives are lived in anxiety, when all our recreational activities are based on making business contacts for increasing our wealth, something is out of kilter. Is it no wonder that

stress and high blood pressure are leading health factors of illness in our society.

Jesus suggests another way of looking at wealth. Instead of *everything depends on me* he suggests that *Everything we have is a gift from God!* Isn't that true? Every breath we take is pure gift. Every morning we wake is rising from death of sleep to live another day. Then we begin to living in trust and gratefulness. Then Jesus' words, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be given you besides."

When we seek God's kingdom, a kingdom of justice and peace by our love of God and neighbor. That is what we are trying to do here at Corpus Christi...help establish the kingdom of God trusting that God will provide what we need.

So I was asking myself how we are doing as a community? How is our household doing? How am I and you personally doing when it comes to trusting in our God and working to establish the Kingdom here.

Here is a simple measurement for us to follow:

Please measure yourself between these two poles: Where are we as a parish? Where are you as a household?

Everything depends on me! Everything we have is a gift from God!

750 households:

One measurement: 425 gave something to support the church

Range for the previous year was from \$11,000 to \$2.

Single retired man \$24 a week

Professional couple raising a family \$11 a week

Couple in their 60s one retired \$80

Single professional woman in her 60s \$144

Eighty year old \$89

couple with man working \$3.21

couple with man a professional \$2.19

We are all on a continuum between everything depends on me and everything we have is a gift from God.

Daily we have choices to make. Do we want the future of our children and grandchildren to simply a rush success and to move downtown and be absorbed by the secular world? Or do we want to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness? Is the Kingdom of God high on our list of priority for spending time and resources?

This parish is committed to establishing the Kingdom of God.

Beginning next week you will find pictures in the back of church

outlining the many programs and opportunities for households to grow in their faith and give witness to their belief. All that we do here at Corpus Christi depends on you and me. WE are Corpus Christi. We have to decide: Do we live and use our resources as if *Everything depends on me!*

or as if *Everything we have is a gift from God!*

By brothers and sisters, please remember Jesus wise words, in the end, no one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.