

Young Adult Reflection
October 11
28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Greetings to All! After what could be described as the perfect summer, I hope you are enjoying this nearly as perfect autumn.

Marty Lucas

Gospel

Mk 10:17-30 or 10:17-27

As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up,
knelt down before him, and asked him,
"Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good?
No one is good but God alone.
You know the commandments: *You shall not kill;*
you shall not commit adultery;
you shall not steal;
you shall not bear false witness;
you shall not defraud;
honor your father and your mother."
He replied and said to him,
"Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth."
Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him,
"You are lacking in one thing.
Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor
and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."
At that statement his face fell,
and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples,
"How hard it is for those who have wealth
to enter the kingdom of God!"
The disciples were amazed at his words.
So Jesus again said to them in reply,
"Children, 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 one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."
They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves,
"Then who can be saved?"
Jesus looked at them and said,
"For human beings it is impossible, but not for God.
All things are possible for God."

A few things strike me in this passage: the rich man was *already* a follower of Christ, and Jesus looked at him and *loved* him as he told the man what else he needed to do to achieve eternal life. So often, we get caught up in the notion that being wealthy is a bad thing. Take another look at the reading. The man went away *sad*, not bad. He was unable to give up his possessions and put his relationship with Jesus first.

Jesus also says that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom. This needle's eye that our Lord is referring to is not a sewing needle; it would obviously be impossible for a camel to pass through that. The needle's eye is the narrow, low clearance openings in the city walls that allowed a camel, but not a horse to pass through, as long as the camel stooped down and crawled through with some assistance. These openings were designed to keep enemy horses out but allow camels into the city

What our Lord is suggesting here is that we need assistance to enter into the kingdom of heaven. We do not earn eternal life in the strict sense nor do we gain heaven alone. We show our desire for eternal life by our good works, prayers, and lives of faith in community with others.

What Jesus challenges the rich young man with applies to us as well. Jesus is inviting the rich young man to strip away all that hinders him from true discipleship. For the rich young man, it happened to be his possessions. For us, it may be other things.