

**OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA, WEYMOUTH**  
**HOMILY FOR 17<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A)**  
**30<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2017**

What do you want so much that you would give everything to get it?

That's the question behind the two parables in today's Gospel.

Our wants form our values and our values cause us to live as we do. Jesus is trying to help us to sort out our wants so that we want only that which has eternal value.

People are quoted in the media saying, "Today is the happiest day of my life!"

They have achieved their heart's desire, they have found their treasure, but what is it – a sporting trophy, a surprise visit to Disney World, meeting a celebrity?

What's wrong? None of these have eternal value.

Eternal means everlasting, never failing, never fading, never disappointing. Do any of any of these examples pass the "eternal test"?

Jesus is using these parables to remind us to apply this test to all our desires.

Because people exhaust themselves working to obtain their heart's desire and sacrifice everything to obtain it, they must be careful what they desire.

It is devastating to sacrifice everything for something that will not give complete satisfaction. Anything less will leave people feeling cheated and frustrated, having wasted their lives on things that are not worth the sacrifice.

The media is full of the complaints of frustrated and angry people whose treasure has turned out to be of limited worth or no worth at all.

Jesus is telling us that eternal value is to be found in the Kingdom of Heaven.

We pray "Thy Kingdom come, but what is the Kingdom and how do we find it?"

The Kingdom of Heaven is where people devote more time and energy to learning and doing the will of God than anything else, like King Solomon in our first reading. He could have chosen riches or the lives of his enemies but he chose discernment.

Discernment is the wisdom to know and do what is eternally good, the love of God for us.

God's love is the treasure hidden in the field of the Church. This treasure is found when everything that is said and done is inspired by God's love, mercy, justice and peace.

The seeking does not mean giving up every pleasure or being guilty about desiring other things, but it does mean that we put the Kingdom of God first with our time and energy.

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things will be added unto you."

God gave Solomon wealth after wisdom, but the wisdom comes first.

The basic question from these parables is this: is God the greatest treasure and the most valuable pearl in our lives?

How much will we give and risk in our search this treasure and this pearl?

People judge our faith by this. The more we give to God and his Kingdom the more convincing is our faith. If our treasure is where our heart is then people will know what we value most.

Jesus invites us to Mass to hear his Word and meet him in Holy Communion every Sunday. Our wanting to be here and our going out to glorify him in by the love, mercy, justice and peace of God in our lives is a clear sign that we value God and his Kingdom more than anything else in the world.

**Rev Geoffrey Carey**