

## Homily 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year A 2020

You know the anecdote about today's Gospel. All those who die without any teeth can never end up in hell. Why not? Because they will have no teeth to grind!! Recently we have been bombarded with stories about the kingdom of God. However, we know that the kingdom of God is about people. Vatican II called us a *pilgrim people* on a journey together; helping and supporting each other, looking out for the strays and helping those who find the going tough or impossible; ready to seek reconciliation rather than continue or prolong a hurt; on the lookout for the outsiders and the enemy, with the hope of bringing them on board. Jesus portrays the kingdom as our deepest desire for which we are willing to sacrifice everything. We desire it for its own sake and not for any personal profit or gain. It is a treasure not of riches, wealth, status or possessions. This treasure is what Solomon asked for: wisdom and discernment, dignity, respect and reverence. All of which are received as generous gifts of God, given to the members of his family, to his *pilgrim people*. And so, a **STORY about wisdom and discernment**

A man once left his country and entered into the service of an abbot in a foreign land. After some time of faithful service, he wanted to return to his wife and native land. Before leaving, the abbot said, *"I am willing to give you either 300 gold pieces or 3 admonitions. Which do you choose?"* The man chose the 3 admonitions." The 1<sup>st</sup> was *"When you change the old road for the new, you will find troubles which you have not looked for.* The 2<sup>nd</sup>: *See much and say little.* The 3<sup>rd</sup> *Think over a thing before you do it, for a thing deliberated is far better."* The abbot then said ***"Take this loaf of bread with you and break it when you are truly happy."***

Soon after leaving, the good man met some travellers who invited him to take the by-way with them. Remembering the 1<sup>st</sup> admonition, the good man declined. Not long after leaving them, he heard shots. Robbers had attacked and killed his companions. *"I have earned my first hundred gold pieces"* he thought, and continued his journey. Arriving at an inn very hungry, he asked for something to eat. He was given a large dish of meat which looked scrumptious. On turning the meat over, however, he was flabbergasted to discover that it was human flesh! He wanted to challenge the innkeeper but remembered the 2<sup>nd</sup> admonition, *"See much and say little"* and remained silent. Settling his bill, he left. But the innkeeper stopped him and said, *"Bravo, bravo! you have saved your life. All those who have questioned my food have been soundly beaten, killed, and cooked."* *"I have earned the second hundred pieces,"* thought the good man.

Reaching his own country, he entered his house, saw no one, but, in the middle of the room, a table was set with two glasses, two forks and two seats; laid for two people. So, he hid under the bed to see what would happen. After a while his wife entered carrying a pitcher of water. A little later, a sprucely dressed young priest come in and sat down. The man was about to jump out when he remembered the final admonition: *"Think over a thing before you do it, for a thing deliberated is much better"* and stopped.

Before they began to eat, his wife turned to the young priest and said: *"My son, let us say our accustomed Pater noster for your father."* On hearing this he jumped up crying and laughing for joy, and embraced and kissed them both. Then he remembered the loaf his master had given him and told him to eat when he was truly happy; he broke the loaf and there fell on the table 300 gold pieces the abbot had secretly put into the loaf.

**(The wisdom of this story lies with you)**

---

**Girl:** So, how many times a day do you shave?

**Man:** Well, about 20 to 25 times every day.

**Girl:** Wow! are you crazy?

**Man:** No, I'm a barber.