

Homily. 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year. C. 30/31 July 2022.

It comes as no surprise to anyone that we want more. We always have and we always will, be it more things, more attention, more love, more friends, more power and influence or more time. Our humanity seems to demand more because life is surging within us and living leads us to always want more. The vanity of which the Preacher with the in the 1st reading speaks lies in wanting more simply for the sake of it, as if having more can magically make us safer and happier. It can't. It never could.

It was this sort of vanity that Jesus addressed when He told the story about the rich land owner who stockpiled his huge harvest all for himself. He became self-satisfied that at last he had more than he could ever want, that finally he could relax, letting go of his fears and worries, only to discover that his time was up and his life was over. Ironically, having worried so much and worked so hard everything he'd amassed it was all now to go to others who hadn't done anything to deserve this bountiful inheritance. To quote the Preacher, this too is vanity and great injustice, yet at the same time it's an all too common experience even today.

In speaking to the crowd gathered around Him, Jesus pointed out the passing nature of all that we've stored up for ourselves. He asked them, as He now asks us, to consider this irony. He says that we are best served by setting our hearts on what lasts; knowledge and love of God and by making use what we've got to help those around us; our families and friends and people who can benefit from what we've accumulated.

This point came home to me again this week when I had need to visit the Cathedral. Pulling my car in to park I couldn't miss the groups of men, yes all men, huddled in sleeping bags and blankets surrounded by their bits and bobs, living and sleeping in the precinct. A quick walk around the City streets revealed more people than ever sleeping in shop doorways and under awnings. There are reasons aplenty for why they are living like this, but these reasons don't do anything to change their reality one little bit.

The fact is that every night and day thousands of Queenslanders are sleeping out, sleeping rough, confronting our own warmth and comfort. Without question, there are people in our area doing the same. We've had some people sleeping here around our own churches. What I do know is that homelessness and rough sleeping is increasing. This can only get worse over the next couple of years as our economy slides downwards. I don't have an answer for this, but if you do please share it.

What I also know is that we are a people of faith, putting on our new selves, modelled in the image of our Creator. As such there is no room amongst us for distinctions between the haves and have nots. As St. Paul says, there is only Christ; He is everything and He is in everything and everyone. This being the case our obligation is to do whatever we can to help and to share from our surplus with our sisters and brothers in their need. After all, every day we rely on the kindness and generosity of Christ who keeps on sharing Himself with us in our need for His loving salvation and life, the treasure that ought matter to us most of all.