

Homily. 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Year. C. 17/18 September 2022.

Money and wealth in and of themselves aren't the issue. It's what we do to get them and how we astutely, wisely and justly use them that is. In a nutshell, Jesus echoing the message of the Prophet Amos, urges us to acquire wealth in just ways that are respectful of the poor and those less fortunate than ourselves. Further to this Jesus directs us to use our material resources generously, with our wits about us, making them servants of our true goals, never masters enslaving us to them.

We are lucky, blessed really, to live where we do at this time in history. Our area of well connected leafy peaceful suburbs has very little crime, a low unemployment rate, few homeless persons, high education levels along with easy access to most of the services we need. Recently 2 houses sold in the Avenue where the Parish house in which I live is located. The house beside me, an old renovated and enlarged place, sold for \$1.44 million. Across the road a high blocked many staired house also sold for over \$1 million. Looking at recent real estate sales in our Parish these figures aren't unusual. The Parish house, a small cottage in comparison, hovers in value at around \$600 thousand. Necessarily, my comments about this are general, not specific, but as a rule of thumb I count \$50 million for every 40 houses I drive past between the bridge and the Ipswich Rd. This wealth is tied up in housing, but granted the positives our area offers and ongoing immigration into Qld and Brisbane these values have stability and a deal of potential to increase.

Another known factor comes from our 2 Parish Schools with a combined enrolment of about 800 children. Of these, around 66% (2/3rds) are Catholic and around 66% or 2/3rds of these reside within the Parish. This

boils down to less than half of these Catholic children and families residing within our Parish. However, we also know that many families deliberately choose to come to our Schools from other places; from Heathwood and Forest Lake, Oxley and Inala, Kenmore, Jindalee, Indooroopilly, Toowong and so on. They do so because of work and transport convenience routes and because our Parish Schools have an enviable reputation with strong educational and religious traditions. All of this speaks further to the gifts we have helped to develop.

Our local St. Vincent De Paul Society tells us another story, this one about pockets of need amongst us. Our local Conference spends hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars visiting and assisting locals in crisis. Again, as we learnt this year, parts of our Parish are vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly flooding, with another wet Summer forecast.

More could be said to further fill out this picture. Suffice it to say that as we thankfully count our gifts and blessings we'd be silly, or in Jesus words lacking in astuteness, not to make friends with those who, often tucked away in hidden corners near to us, can benefit from our resources. If we're going to be enslaved to anything let's be slaves and servants of God, the giver of all good gifts. God who has graced us in so many ways, entrusting us with what we have. Like the smart stewards we're called to be let's be sure to put our wealth and resources to work for the common good. Doing so will ensure that this world and life prepares us well for the just friendship of all people in the coming Kingdom of God when our wealth or otherwise matters not at all.