



## Catholic Community

Member of the English-Speaking Mission

Youth Mass: **1<sup>st</sup> Friday at 6 p.m. in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel**

**Sundays at 10 a.m. in the main Sanctuary**

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Facebook: All Saints Catholic Community Berlin

Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 10:00-12:00

### August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (Missal no. 909): Wisdom 18:6-9 • Ps 33:1, 12, 18-22 • Heb 11:1-2, 8-19 • Luke 12:32-48

**Welcome to our 10 am Mass at All Saints. Our Celebrant today is Fr. Wolfgang Felber**

- Lector: NN • Eucharistic Ministers: Beate Hausmann, Thomas Schmidt, Johannes Ploog •
- Greeter: Anthony Kwasi Sessi • Altar Servers: Konrad Giersdorf, Oshin Michael •
- Hospitality: NN • Designated collection: All Saints •

#### **Hoard, and You Shall Lose** (Luke 12, 16-21)

It is hard to miss the point of the parable of the Rich Fool in today's gospel: "*You can't take anything with you.*" That is a bit of ancient wisdom, hardly requiring Christian revelation. It is an obvious human truth already clearly stated in Ecclesiastes – as we just heard: "*Here is one who has labored with wisdom and knowledge and skill, and yet to another who has not labored over it, he must leave property.*" (v 2,21) The parable in Luke's gospel goes deeper than the bald facts of human mortality and the fact that material possessions perish and pass away. A careful reading of the story shows it to be a brilliant representation illustrating how greed destroys all relationships.

"*The land of a rich man produced abundantly*" (v 16) - notice that the subject of the sentence is **the land**. This reflects the Jewish insight that, whatever may be the human contribution in the process of farming, it is **the land**, the earth, that is the source of food. Therefore, an abundant crop, like the land itself, is a gift from God. The law of "*no work on the Sabbath*" is meant to help people stay in touch with this reality – that the land is a gift from God. It will become clear that the land owner of the parable has lost touch with this dimension of his relationship with the Creator.

This man is pursuing an interior monologue. And he does this in a vacuum of selfishness without other persons interfering. This is conveyed by the humorous sound of "*I will say to my soul, to my yuch,...*" (v 19). The translation for our liturgy "*I shall say to myself*" does not convey this humorous aspect. "*And he thought to himself, <What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?>*" (v 17) The very phrasing of the question shows the consequences of forgetting that land and crops are divine gifts: the man has also lost the sense of stewardship that flows from that perception; he has forgotten the Torah wisdom that the goods of the earth are meant to meet the needs of all, not simply the desires of those who happen to manage the land. This landowner speaks too easily of "**my** crops."

For him, the unexpected abundance is not for the benefit of the community; rather it presents a crisis of his management of his personal assets. "*Then he said, <I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods>*". *And I will say to my soul, to my yuch,; <Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years: relax, eat, drink, be merry.>*" (vv 18.19) No mention of the larger community here; it is a question of "**my** grain and **my** goods."

The fact that this man is pursuing an interior monologue in a vacuum of selfishness – as we said before - is conveyed by the humorous sound of "*I will say to my soul, <Soul...>*" — or, in a translation that catches the humor even better: "*I will say to myself, <Self, you have ample goods laid up for many years: relax, eat, drink, be merry>*".

Then our story continues: "*But God said to him, <You fool! This very night your life, your soul, your self, your yuch,, is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?>*" (v 20) Surprise, surprise—a forgotten auditor is heard from: the Creator. There is an economic image here, suggesting the translation: "*This night they will demand back this 'self', this yuch, of yours...*" Even one's self is a gift. Therefore, the man stands revealed as having allowed his greed to destroy all his relationships —his relationship with the earth, with his community, with himself, and with God.

This parable has it something to say to us?

cf. [http://liturgy.slu.edu/18OrdC073116/theword\\_hamm.html](http://liturgy.slu.edu/18OrdC073116/theword_hamm.html)