



October 10, 2021

## Twenty-Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time

*"All things are possible for God." Mark 10:27*

Dear Friends;

In 1934 the world was in the depths of a worldwide financial crisis. Here and in other countries democracies were being threatened. Social unrest, nationalism, fascism, communism and socialism were vying for control. That year the United States Catholic Bishops issued a pastoral letter challenging the economic system beneath the economic crisis—capitalism, or today we would say neoliberal capitalism. They wrote:

*The philosophy which has ruled governments, groups, and individuals for the past three hundred years has not taken as its guide the moral law, has not considered the rights of [people]. Money, not [people], has been the supreme consideration and the justifying end. That philosophy permits individuals to accumulate as much wealth as they can, according to the unfair method of modern business and to use such accumulated wealth as they see fit...*

*Christ gave his life to redeem the world. The life of Christ was a life of sacrifice. The life of a Christian must be a life of sacrifice. We cannot imitate the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary by trying to get all that we can. We can only imitate the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary by trying to give all we can.*

The revelations this past week of the Pandora Papers reveal that things have not changed much. The same logic of this economic system drives greed and selfishness. Rather than the rich seeing that taxes are their responsibility to civil society they are driven to hoard and hide their wealth. Their hidden wealth is the medical care, education, and housing of which all societies are being deprived. This current economic system, and its logic of the endless pursuit of ever more, is driving the ecological crisis and pushing us to disaster. Our devotion to this system keeps us from dreaming of a sustainable system where people and nature are central rather than capital.

Today the young man in the gospel is not a bad person. He has followed faithfully the commandments. We need guidelines with specific boundaries that point us toward moral living and the common good. But as we move into maturity we need more. It is Jesus' gaze of love which invites us to something more. His love empowers us to leave everything else behind including this economic system.

Jesus invites us to build a new world based on love. The only condition for moving into this world is a willingness to let go of everything. Power, control, and security that come with many possessions, is an obstacle to the vulnerability, receptivity and risk required to hand oneself over to love. We all hold on to things that keep us from the freedom of God's reign. We will not be able to change without the grace of God urging us to divest of everything that holds us back. But all this is possible with God.

Hafiz a fourteenth century Persian Poet wrote,

*Even, after all this time  
The sun never says to the earth  
"You owe me."  
Look, what happens  
with a love like that,  
It lights up the whole sky.*

Peace,

*Fr Ron*

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