

6. November 2020

“Prudent children of light”

Lk 16:1-8

He also said to his disciples, 'There was a rich man and he had a steward who was denounced to him for being wasteful with his property. He called for the man and said, "What is this I hear about you? Draw me up an account of your stewardship because you are not to be my steward any longer." Then the steward said to himself, "Now that my master is taking the stewardship from me, what am I to do? Dig? I am not strong enough. Go begging? I should be too ashamed. Ah, I know what I will do to make sure that when I am dismissed from office there will be some to welcome me into their homes." Then he called his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, "How much do you owe my master?" "One hundred measures of oil," he said. The steward said, "Here, take your bond; sit down and quickly write fifty." To another he said, "And you, sir, how much do you owe?" "One hundred measures of wheat," he said. The steward said, "Here, take your bond and write eighty." The master praised the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light.'

The dishonest steward sought a way out for himself and made "friends" in his predicament who were then indebted to him. He knew how to deal with people in order to commit them, he knew the rules of this world. Even if in the context of injustice, he acted as Jesus recommends to his believers: “use money, tainted as it is, to win you friends” (Lk 16:9).

Jesus wants to make us aware that we should be prudent in our dealings with others, which includes the prudent use of the gifts entrusted to us. We know the term "Christian prudence" in spiritual education.

“Store up treasures for yourselves in heaven” is what Jesus advises us (Mt 6:20). This is a concrete word of the Lord, which we should consider and carry out. It would also be related to the word that we collect oil in our lamps (cf. Mt 25:1-13). Jesus wants us to be awake and praying when He comes back and we should be busy serving the Kingdom of God.

Christian wisdom invites us to choose all that serves the glory of God most and to use all circumstances to grow in love on the way of discipleship. This wisdom

gives our life a very central direction: how can we use the present time, the present circumstances, to do good, to live pleasingly to God and to make other people inclined to us?

As far as our neighbour is concerned, it is not only the material gifts with which we can serve them. Every gesture of love, every good and sincere word, every proclamation of the Gospel, every true help usually arouses in the other person gratitude which he will think of when we ourselves are in need.

True wisdom is directed towards the good. It must not be confused with cunning or a certain cunning. This is certainly one reason why the Lord calls the cleverness of serpents together with the guilelessness of doves (*cf. Mt 10:16*). Cleverness does not ask for and strive for the objective good and value of things, but tries to take all the circumstances for itself in order to achieve its own goals. Depending on one's character disposition, cunning can easily be associated with deceit and deception, dishonesty and other vices which are far from the virtue of prudence.

The mention of the deaf by Jesus refers to the purity of intention. If it is pure, then one will also wisely choose the means that correspond to this purity and not unfair means to achieve an apparently good and justified goal. "The end justifies the means" is an evil phrase which in its wrongness can lead to terrible justifications. With a true orientation the virtue of prudence awakens to all its splendour and to the greatest possible fruitfulness of our path! We begin to live in the so-called *kairos*. Every day, every circumstance now becomes an opportunity to use it wisely for eternity and to gather a treasure in heaven. We have not only awakened to friendship with God, but we can also make friends in heaven.

Here I would like to point out specifically the help for the poor souls. It is not only All Souls' Day on which we should think in a special way about the souls who still need to be completed after death. In private revelations it is repeatedly pointed out that especially in November prayer for our brothers and sisters in the Purgatory becomes very fruitful. We can very well combine two things here: Helping them through our prayer and making us friends (in heaven). We only need to imagine how grateful a soul will be when it receives comfort and relief through our prayer and comes to see God for whom it longs and suffers so much that it has not yet done so. It will not forget it for all eternity and will give us in eternity the gift of its love and gratitude. And what a small act it is easy for her to pray the Hail Mary, again and again, in between, when washing the dishes, driving the car, etc.

I also recommend to add to the rosary - especially this month - after each decade:
“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.”

Let us think of the innumerable possibilities to serve God. They will become ever more present to us in the application of Christian wisdom, and the zeal for good will also grow. For if love inspires us and we practise it, it will grow stronger and stronger, just as it can cool down if we do not do so and our lives sink into indifference!

As children of light, let us not be lazy to do good. It is not inadmissible to do so with a view to gathering treasures in heaven. Of course we grow in the love of God, so that we learn to do everything out of love for Him, just as He does everything out of love for us!

May the Lord praise the wisdom of the children of light in our lives!