

JULY 24, 2011

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

MATTHEW 13:44-52

Jesus used parables so that the message he was trying to convey would more easily be understood. I think the important message in these three parables is that the reign of God (i.e. a relationship with God) is sought after treasure, something to be excited about, something to earnestly work for, and finally, with it, one will truly be happy and fulfilled.

As I read this Gospel I am challenged to consider what or who is my treasure, or, in other words,

‡ Where is my heart?

‡ Do I put as much time and energy into building and/or sustaining my relationship with God as I do into other interests?

The gospel challenges me to examine my goals and focus my life and ponder whether my ultimate goal is directed to this treasure who is the Lord in my life. Questions that guide me are:

‡ Are daily living activities distracting me from building a real relationship with God or do I turn them into building-blocks?

‡ How do I remind myself to be mindful of the innumerable ways the Lord is present to me in my day-to-day encounters with others?

‡ Do I recommit myself each day and open myself to God's provident love, allowing it to work for me and in me, so that my tendencies to self-reliance are diminished?

Matthew goes on to tell us that God's reign embraces all-is all-inclusive. It is the net that will gather us all in at the end of time. In the end, God will do the separation of the good and bad-I have no responsibility in it. All I need to concentration is growing in my relationship with God which comes to me through all those people who share "the net" in our time and space. This relationship will not just happen-it takes work-work with all those strange folks who are the net with me-who are the reign of God for me.

For reflection:

What have you found to be the key to working with so many varied individuals in the "net of the reign of God" - individuals whose lives are the building blocks of the reign of God for you at this time?

--Reflection and Questions prepared by Sr. Barbara Lynn Hyzak, CDP