

## Homily for the 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

“Good Master, what must I do?”

We know this story. It’s not the first time we’ve heard it. It’s the story about the young man who is very rich. He asks the question: “What must I do?” The answer is direct...give away what money you have and take care of those in need. But alas, the young man is very rich – doesn’t want to let go. He turns away and leaves.

But suppose we’re wrong. Suppose this isn’t what the story is about. Suppose there is something else going to – something that might say more to us than suspected.

“Good Master, what must I do?” Here is a young man who is a genuinely good man trying to do the best he can. He goes to the synagogue. He is a pillar of the community. And Jesus knows this. Jesus knows that this is a good man...but his life is incomplete. He has an emptiness in his heart. He has everything. He has nothing.

So Jesus asks him to give his money to the poor. But not because the poor need the money. Jesus makes this request because the rich young man needs to give away, to get rid of, to let go of, that which is holding him down....weighing him down. Jesus wants the young man to be free and so he invites him to let go. If this young man wants to live

differently, he must make changes. The young man can't do that unless he lets go of what is holding him down. In this case, it was his wealth.

“Good Master, what must I do?” The young man probably regrets his question. The young man turns away sadly. The Master had answered his question. It just wasn't the answer he wanted. He wanted a cure that did not require a change.

“Good master, what must I do?” I wonder how many of us look at our lives and say to ourselves, “I need to live differently. I want my life to change.” I wonder how many of us find life lacking...or hollow...or frustrating? I wonder...what would Christ ask me to give up? Would it be my attachment to my possessions? Would it be bad habits? Would it be my working myself to death always planning for that time in the future when things would be different....problem is the future never comes? Would be a hurt, an anger, a frustration, a resentment or a struggle that I simply refuse to let go? I wonder what God might ask us to let go of in order to find that which is missing, that which might make us completely, that which might fill up what is lacking in our lives?

And I wonder...would we have the courage to let it go. “Good Master...what must I do?”