

17TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR.

1 Kgs 3: 5, 7-12; Ps. 118 (119); Rom 8: 28-30; Matt

The past few Sundays we have been studying the parables that Jesus taught.

- Parables are stories about everyday people and stories of things that help us understand spiritual truths.

Last week Jesus compared the kingdom of God to a mustard seed assuring us that growth is inevitable from small beginnings. Two weeks ago, we read Jesus' parable about the different soils spelling out the need to be receptive of God's word.

Today, *"The Kingdom ... is like a treasure buried in a field..."* Jesus says *"The Kingdom.... is like a merchant searching for fine pearls"*

The two stories are similar as tales of discovering something valuable and the joy that follows such a discovery.

The discovery ends in selling everything we have in order to take possession of the treasure and the pearl.

To a certain extent the two stories appeal to our nature as consumers: **"Buy wisely!"** is the message.

We can also hear them as a call to take charge, take control, take possession of the kingdom of God, no matter the cost.

- It is a call for us to desire the kingdom above all else.
- The kingdom of God is FAR more valuable than anything in this world.

Q: What is the Gospel here? What is the Good News in all this?

Yes the kingdom is a treasure, a pearl of great price.

Whether we stumble on it or search for it and find it – if, however, after selling everything and burying it we begin to think of it as

"OURS" this will inevitably lead to thinking **"ITS NOT THEIR'S"**

Whoever **"THEIR'S"** happens to be: whether it another religious group - or an ethnic group - or any group that we don't think worthy of our treasure, then there is trouble!!!

In spite of the sacrifices we make over the acquisition of the of the kingdom we are called to receive it as a gift.

Let us be reminded that, there is one designated donor and His plan is that as many as possible shall have it.

It is a must to accept it as a gift given by God.

God's pleasure is that it is for all God's children.

For this reason as Church and as members of a particular grouping within the Church of St Joseph's we should always be looking for ways of reaching out, incorporation, inviting, involving those that are on the peripheral.

Without these actions we our church or group will become a click and then we shall fall into the danger of presiding over a dying church or a dying individual group.

That's the more reason why the chairman of the PAC has written to the various groupings of the parish to give information about the vision of their groups.

At any cost we need to avoid investing in a church or group that runs the risk of extinction.

"Buy wisely" is the message of the day!