

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE FESTIVAL OF HOLY CROSS
(OCTOBER 8TH 2006)

Dearly beloved:

Next Sunday, October 8th is the Fourth Sunday after the Festival of Holy Cross. In the Holy Gospel reading, Jesus tells His disciples that “*What is considered admirable in human eyes is hated in the sight of God*”. Jesus advises His disciples to follow in the footsteps of the shrewd steward who used money generously to make friends for himself. Generous giving is connected with financial assistance to those in need. Those who receive aid become our friends because we are merciful to them in their time of need, just as God is merciful to us in our time of need.

Money allows us to live, eat, drink, have clothing, shelter, transportation, maintain our health, and help our families and friends. Money is an instrument of social expression. We give money to churches, organizations and individuals that are in our good graces. We withhold money as sign of our disapproval. Money can be a weapon that we use to defend ourselves from attack or to bring down our enemies. In our society, the list of things money can buy is endless. In my opinion, money is a universal passport to everywhere except heaven, and universal provider of everything, except happiness. Money is a wonderful servant, but it is a horrible master.

Some time ago, I read an article written by a grown up person who decided to change his wrongful way of life to Christianity. The day came for him to be baptized – an incredible event in the eyes of those who knew his previous lifestyle and attitude. After the baptism, he said he would like to pay half of the priest’s annual salary. When his friends asked him why, his simple response was, “My pocket was baptized too”.

As Jesus said, No one can serve two masters. In other words, we cannot serve God and wealth at the same time and we have to find out who is the real boss in our life. God loans everything to us, our time, health, talents, families, friends, etc. We are called to use God’s gifts wisely. There are two ways we can view our money, “*How much of our money shall we use for God? OR “How much of God’s money shall we use for ourselves*”.

“Lord, begin a new work of love within us. Purify and transform us that we may be fully like Christ”.

Please read the following Bible verses, in preparation for this Sunday's commemoration.

Bible readings for Sunday, October 8th 2006.

(Fourth Sunday After the Festival of Holy Cross)

Before Holy Qurbana:

Numbers	-	29: 35-40
I Kings	-	8: 22-30
Psalms	-	42: 1-11

Holy Qurbana

General Epistles:	Acts	-	21: 17-26
Epistles of St. Paul:	I Corinthians	-	1: 21-29
Holy Gospel:	St. Luke	-	16: 9-18

With prayers,
Thomas Alex