

## Sunday homily (August, 2016) on Lk 12:35-40

Steve Jobs, known to the world as perhaps one of the smartest minds of the 21st century, and one of the wealthiest man in the world, achieved every professional objective there was to achieve, but could never enjoy the little joys that came along with his everyday life. I would like to read Steve Jobs' Last Words -

"I reached the pinnacle of success in the business world. In others' eyes, My life is an epitome of success. However aside from work, I have little joy. In the end, wealth is only a fact of life that I am accustomed to.

At this moment, lying on the sick bed and recalling my whole life, I realize that all the recognition and wealth that I took so much pride in, have paled and become meaningless in the face of impending death.

Now I know when we have accumulated sufficient wealth to last our lifetime. we should pursue other matters that are unrelated to wealth...

Should be something that is more important: Perhaps relationships\* perhaps art, perhaps a dream from younger days

Non-stop pursuing of wealth will only turn a person into a twisted being, just like me.

God gave us the senses to let us feel the love in everyone's heart, not the illusions brought about by wealth.

The wealth I have won in my life I cannot bring with me. What I can bring is only the memories precipitated by love.

That's the true riches which will follow you, accompany you, giving you strength and light to go on.

Material things lost can be found. But there is one thing that can never be found when it is lost : Life."

Sigmund Freud, a famous Austrian neurologist, is the founder of psychoanalysis. He died just before World War II. Freud had a favorite story that touches on the point of preparedness.

The story concerns a sailor who was shipwrecked and washed ashore on a South Pacific island. He was greeted enthusiastically by natives.

They clapped and sang, hoisted him on their shoulders, carried him to their village, and sat him on a golden throne. Little by little, the sailor learned what was going on.

The islanders had a custom of occasionally making a man king for a year. During his kingship he could order his subjects to do anything within reason, and they would obey him without question The sailor was delighted that he had been chosen to be the king.

He couldn't believe his good fortune. Then one day he began to wonder what happened to a king when his year of kingship ended. That's when his excitement and enthusiasm came to an abrupt end.

He discovered that at the end of his kingship, he would be banished to a barren island, called King's Island. There he would be left to starve to death as a sacrifice to the gods.

After the sailor recovered from his shock, he slowly began to put together a plan. As king, he ordered the carpenters of the island to build a fleet of small boats.

When the boats were ready, he ordered the farmers of the island to dig up fruit trees and plants, put them in the boats, and transplant them on King's Island.

Finally, he ordered the stone masons to build a house on King's Island. In this way, the sailor prepared carefully for the day when his kingship would end and he would be banished to King's Island. That story makes a good illustration of what Jesus is telling us in today's gospel.

In the words of Jesus, in the gospel, he is telling us to "provide an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy." *Luke 12:33*

He's telling us to do what the sailor did.

Today's gospel invites us to ask ourselves how well we are preparing ourselves for that day when, like the sailor in the story, our life on this planet will come to an end.

It invites us to ask ourselves, "If we were to die tonight, how ready would we be to face God?"

And if our answer to that question leaves something to be desired, then we can be sure that Jesus is speaking to us in a special way through today's gospel. He is saying:

"Be like servants who await their master's return... You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come."

That's the message that Jesus gives us in today's gospel. That's the message that Jesus wants us to take to heart in this liturgy.

**Let's close with a passage from James Weldon Johnson's book *God's Trombones*.**

In the passage Johnson describes the death of a woman who took to heart Jesus' words in today's gospel and was prepared for death when it came. Johnson says of the woman: "[Sister Caroline] saw what we couldn't see; she saw Old Death. She saw Old Death coming like a falling star. But death didn't frighten Sister Caroline; he looked to her like a welcome friend. And she whispered to us: 'I'm going home.' And she smiled and closed her eyes.