

AUGUST 19, 2025, FATHER VIJAI AMIRTHARAJ

A Hollywood producer calls his friend, another Hollywood producer on the phone.

"Hey, how are you doing?" he asks. "Well," responds his friend,

"I just sold a screenplay for \ \$200 ,000.

I also wrote a novel and got a \ \$50 ,000 advance from the publisher.

I have a new TV series coming next week and everyone is saying that this is going

to be a big hit and bring in a lot of money. And I am in the process of building a \ \$10 million mansion on the beach. I am doing great.

How are you? Okay, says the first producer, I'll call you back when you are alone.

Sisters and brothers, the producer friend in the story was swollen with his ego full of what he was able to achieve and was able to accumulate.

In other words, he was full of himself. I'm sure we have all heard of that expression,

he is full of himself or herself. And we may know some people who live with that kind of attitude, a sense of an exaggerated sense of self -worth.

Our first reading, our gospel reading today, "Won us against such self -seeking attitude." The first reading speaks of how God can work in our lives to bring about life, to give us the gifts and blessings that only God can give even in our weakness, even in our unworthiness. And similarly, in our gospel reading, our Lord Jesus cautions his disciples not to that sucked into the materialistic and the self -seeking tendencies of the society.

Now, the teaching of Jesus about the rich person entering the kingdom would have shocked the disciples because material wealth at the time was considered to be a blessing from God. Now, Jesus, on the other hand saw how material possessions consumed the rich, distracting them from the more important gifts of life,

things and gifts like relationships, or community, or the dependence on God, or humility before God and so on. A rich person became like a fully loaded camel trying to get through a narrow door. We see some of this tendency in the rich young man who comes to Jesus wanting to inherit eternal life.

And Jesus challenges this man that, in spite of living a virtuous life, is still filled by his material wealth and possessions. And or you need to get rid of that in order to truly live as a person of God's kingdom.

Sisters and brothers, the reality today is that there are too many relationships that are continuing to be destroyed because of money, because of wealth, because of property, and because of inheritance. I know more than a few families where siblings have not spoken to each other for many, many years because of inheritance or family property. Some are angry even with their parents, even after much after they are dead and gone, because they believe that they did not get their fair share of the inheritance.

Therefore, the warning of Jesus is real for us today as it was so many years ago. God invites each of us to come before Him with humility, with open hearts, acknowledging that God is the author of everything that we have. Our emptiness and our humility or what will enable us to receive the gifts and blessings of God even more. And we enter that kind of discipleship each day when we surrender ourselves before God with gratitude, with appreciation for the blessings of God. We pray today for such a gift. Amen.