



## Things to Ponder

- [About the Author](#)
- [Order](#)
- [About the Book](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [Readers' Comments](#)
- [News & Events](#)
- [A Prayer for the Day](#)
- [Things To Shout Out!](#)
- [Things to Ponder](#)
- [My Favorite Quotes](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Home](#)

## **Homily Reflections – Gospel of Mark 10:17-30**

---

### **Introduction: The Call for Enough**

In this Sunday's Gospel, Mark describes in some detail an unnamed man who approaches Jesus and inquires about what he must do to inherit eternal life. He affirms that he has faithfully kept the Ten Commandments from his youth – a personal declaration that indicates his essential goodness. Mark beautifully reports that Jesus “loved him.”

Nevertheless, Mark shows that Jesus is asking more of him – a lot more to follow him. “You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” With this unexpected challenge facing him, the man leaves in sadness – for he had many possessions. *Have you ever felt Jesus was asking perhaps too much from you?*

Just as in the teachings last Sunday about being faithful in marriage and becoming childlike, Mark shows Jesus once again holding up an ideal. It is an ideal in keeping with Jesus' other teachings on detachment. Just as Mark shows Jesus teaching his disciples to detach themselves from power by becoming like children, so here he shows Jesus teaching them to detach themselves from possessions. And by showing that despite his goodness, this rich man cannot follow Jesus' instruction, Mark indicates that Jesus is setting up a norm for holiness that demands far more than a conventional one. This whole episode dramatizes the counter-cultural invitation of Jesus' request.

*What do you treasure? What obstacles keep you from embracing God's call to holiness (wholeness)?*

As a good storyteller, Mark further highlights that Jesus very much wants this man to follow him and to be his close disciple. He “loves him” and is extending an open invitation. Yet, he says “No.”

Like all of us, the man continues his journey.

*Do you think perhaps he later returned to Jesus' Way, like many of us do in life's twists and turns?*

This Gospel passage concludes with Jesus' astonishing comment: “How hard it is for

those who have wealth to enter the Kingdom of God!” His disciples were “amazed at his words.”(Jesus’ statement that “it is easier for a camel” is simply an exaggeration typical of first-century Jewish rabbinical teaching – to make the point clear.)

When the disciples ask, “Then who can be saved?” Jesus responds: “For human beings it is impossible, but not for God. All things are possible for God.” In this pithy exchange, Mark shows Jesus was asking his followers to commit themselves to a way of living that could not be accomplished without God’s grace. A fitting conclusion to this “hard” Gospel!

I would invite you to take time to read and ponder words from the *Gospel of Mark 10:17-30*.

What word or words caught your attention?  
What in this passage comforted/challenged you?  
What is “hard” for you in walking the Way of Jesus?

### **Further Questions and Reflections:**

Perhaps the rich man is us. We try to follow the commandments. Yet there is always a next step available, a deepening of our faith, a further letting go of that which holds us back from God. That is often wealth and possessions, but it can also be other things (addictions, pride, etc.). God will demand everything from us, if we only ask honestly what still holds us back.” Ponder, Mahri Leonard-Fleckman – *What is holding you back? How can possessions and wealth tie you down?*

*Am I tempted to accumulate “more and more” rather than settle for “enough” and share what is surplus with those in need? Do I hear the “Call of Enough?” What is “enough” for you/your family?*

*As a family, take an inventory of your possessions. Are there things in your house that you no longer need or use? What might you do with these things?*

**Ponder:** *Do your possessions “own” you or do you “own” your possessions? A tough question indeed!*

*Deacon David*

Deacon David Suley  
St. Patrick Catholic Church  
Rockville, Maryland

Published with Permission