

## **Eighth Sunday after Pentecost**

### ***True Ambition***

*“The children of this world are in relation to their own generation more prudent than are the children of the light” (Luke, 16:8)*

The Gospel of today is not easy to understand. At first sight one might conclude that Our Lord is praising the wicked deeds of the dishonest steward. Indeed, the words with which Christ concludes the parable, *“Make friends for yourselves with the mammon of iniquity,”* would seem to corroborate this interpretation. Actually, Our Lord spoke these words in a sarcastic sense, implying that, while friendship with the mammon of iniquity (the spirit of the world) may help toward success in the present life, it will be of little benefit toward the attainment of life eternal: The chief message which Our Saviour wished to communicate is that we should manifest in the task of saving our souls a spirit of ambition similar to that shown by worldly-minded persons in their desire to attain success in the present life.

How diligently people will work for the things of this world The politician will make every effort to win the votes he needs to be elected to office. The business man will toil from morning to night to carry out a profitable deal or to make a shrewd bargain. The scientist will work untiringly in his laboratory for years to discover some new phase of nature's laws or to invent some means of adding to men's bodily comfort.

The actor will rehearse his lines over and over again, so that he may win the applause of the audience and see his name in brilliant lights outside the theatre. Yet, how little ambition most of these people will manifest toward the all-important goal of life, the everlasting possession of God. Indeed, many Catholics are numbered among those who practice worldly prudence in their quest for success in the eyes of their fellow men, but show little concern for the most important success, their eternal salvation.

When we studied the Catechism in our childhood we learned that the chief purpose of our existence is to know, to love and to serve God in this world in order to be happy with Him forever in the next. Have we put this lesson into practice? Have we perhaps in the course of the years forgotten that everything the world can offer is of little value compared to the endless happiness promised us in the life beyond the grave? Can we honestly say that we have given to the task of saving our soul at least as much zeal as we have given to the quest for success and happiness on earth?

### **Practical Application**

Life is very brief, and we know not when it will draw to a close. If we make it our first ambition to seek the kingdom of heaven, we shall not be much concerned with worldly ambitions. Let us prove that we have true prudence by making the service of God the principal object of our ambition and desires.