

## Pastoral Reflection: 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time- Luke 6,17.20-26

### Rich and Poor

One of the hallmarks of modern morality is the emphasis on the personal freedom and responsibility. The measuring stick of morality seems to be: "If my actions as an individual do not injure others, then, the actions are permissible." Of course, this ignores the broader picture. We, as individuals, form a society. We contribute to that society in one form or another. Hence, we need to take a certain responsibility for our society. Personal freedom and responsibility do not preclude a sense of social justice.

"Social justice" is the obligation of a society to create conditions that allow individuals and groups to receive what is owed them. The fundamental rights of the individual and social equality flow from the dignity of the person. Since all people have equal dignity, society should make an effort to lessen social and economic inequality.

The Christian virtue of "solidarity" is "social charity" it is a respect and love for others based upon their dignity as people. Solidarity means a sharing of material goods, and, more important, a sharing of faith and other spiritual values.

In Luke's sense, the "poor" have a sense of solidarity, for they focus on the good of others. The "rich" in Luke's eyes, focus only on the self and the consequences of actions on the self (while ignoring others).

Love makes us economically poor but enriches our lives; ambition makes us economically secure but leaves us selfish and shallow. Our lives reveal our priorities. May God give us the power to choose love over ambition, his Kingdom over present riches.