

## 25th Sunday of the Year (C)

September 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> 2025

5.00pm Ballarat East, 9am Gordon (baptisms), 10.30am Ballan

You'll notice that I've read the shorter form the Gospel given for today. While I don't usually do this, I've not read the parable of the unjust steward after various commentators and biblical scholars offered a vast array of possible interpretations and homiletic pathways. Biblical interpretation is a significant part of our 'reading' of the Word of God which as Marcus Borg says *"For Christians, the status of the bible as sacred scripture means that it is the most important collection of writings we know. These are the primary writings that define who we are in relation to God and who we are as a community and as individuals. This is the book that has shaped us and will continue to shape us... We are to listen to it well, and let its central stories shape our vision of God, our identity, and our sense of what faithfulness to God means"*<sup>1</sup>

Today's Gospel, with its focus on stewardship, trust and security, has led me to consider three questions:

*How much do I really need?*

*How much do I have a right to use?*

*What constitutes exploitation?*

When reflecting on how much I really need, it's ironic that each time I'm driving to Sunday Mass from Gordon's 9am Mass to Ballan for 10.30am Mass, I listen (as always 774 ABC radio) Marco Mellado who joins Lisa Leong and according to the ABC website, he *shares the secrets to supercharging your superannuation*<sup>2</sup>. It's a whole segment on super and I smile each time now that I've turned 60 that I receive an email from my super provider asking if I've got enough to retire yet – I smile because I think it's a question they should know the answer to! But really – what is enough? At what point do we say this is enough? How much more do I need, not just to live decently, with security and dignity, but also with a clear conscience? Our consumer culture will tell us through advertising and brand placement that we always need more, that latest product... that will provide us with the satisfaction we really need. Such considerations are very first world, as we know that most people across the globe aren't financially secure. In our

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<sup>1</sup> *Reading the Bible again for the first time*, Marcus J. Borg

<sup>2</sup> [Supercharge your super - ABC listen](#)

faith context the question of where our real security comes from can't be avoided – and our Gospel today concludes saying that we can't serve both God and money! Trust and security are linked and in what and in whom we placing our trust?

This leads to my second question for reflection - *How much do I have a right to use?* This ethical consideration invites us to see ourselves in relation to others and what share of the world's limited resources I have a right to use?

Thirdly, the great question of justice asks *What constitutes exploitation?* This includes not only my purchases (sweatshops...) that impact on other people, but the environmental consequences of my living – renewable energy....

And as I considered these questions, I was aware of that we are mid-way through the Season of Creation<sup>3</sup> – a season the Christian churches have joined to celebrate. Pope Francis recognised the importance of setting aside this month for the Catholic Church to join with other Christians in reflecting and acting on the care for our common home. This year marks the 10th anniversary of his landmark Encyclical *Laudato Si'*<sup>4</sup> in which he insisted that action to protect the environment and to address climate change is as much an issue of justice as is providing shelter and food for the poor. The effects of neglecting and exploiting the environment fall heaviest on the poor. They also threaten the future of the planet and betray the trust by which we hold our world for future generations. *Laudato Si'* offers a vision of an interrelated world in which what we do well or badly in one of our relationships will affect all our other relationships. Our environment is not part of the world; it is our whole and only world. If we exploit and pollute the natural world, we shall also foul and put at risk our entire human world. This vision is challenging but it is also reassuring. Many of us find it difficult to make care for the environment a personal priority because there seems to be such a large gap between anything we can do and the large realities of the environment – global warming, desertification, rising sea levels, the tension between the need for power and the threat to the environment posed by fossil fuels, and so on. But when we see the world as a network of relationships in which all is interconnected, we can work at seeking integrity in the relationships that shape our own lives.

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<sup>3</sup> [Your Guide to Celebrate the Season of Creation 2025 - Season of Creation](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Laudato si' \(24 May 2015\)](#)

From this perspective, our commitment to addressing the big environmental issues of our day begins with the small details of our daily life - the power we use, the packaging we accept, composting our food, the ways we travel, for example. Attention to small details is not an attempt to look good but an expression of respect. Like the disciplines of fasting and of prayer that have traditionally undergirded a life lived to God, they form the matrix of a life that takes the environment seriously. As we pay attention to small things, we can recognise more clearly the character of our culture with its generous and reckless elements, its extravagance and its modesty, its destructive and its healing elements.

Personal attention to our own lives, however, opens out into larger relationships to people and to groups that are part of our lives. We begin to see the links between the neglect of the environment and the neglect of Indigenous Australians, people who seek protection and people who are disadvantaged. We begin to long for integral justice.

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Fr Justin Driscoll – Co-Pastor