

Jesus speaks to us; “Take care to guard against all greed.”

Now, a question; have you even seen a hearse pulling a u-haul? No! You can't take it with you. Yet greed can be a very strong feeling experienced by many people.

St. Ignatius Layola developed a strong spirituality that focused on feelings. He called them spirits; not ghostly spirits but the feelings which seem to reside within us and greatly affect the way we think and feel, the way we experience life and the choices we make or don't make. In short, the way we live our lives.

These feelings can seem to be permanent and stay with us day after day unless we focus on them and try to get rid of them or deepen them if they are good.

Now I have 22 living nieces and nephews. It is amazing to see how different they are. One is possessed with a quiet, proper kind of spirit. His sister is quite angry. Another sister is shy yet friendly and humorous. Another is a bit of a control freak. Another is snappy and yet considerate.

I'm not going to take you through all 22 but just to show there are many kinds of feelings or spirits that are embedded in our psyches and affect us deeply. Jesus puts His finger on one of them, greed, in today's Gospel.

Are you aware that these feelings, these spirits, affect your life deeply? St. Ignatius came to understand that it is very important for each of us to become aware of the spirit(s), the feelings that possess us, that affect our lives so strongly.

If they are good spirits, like generosity, it's important to deepen them. But if they are bad spirits, like strong anger, even rage, it's important to let go of them with God's help.

The process of becoming aware is a form of prayer called discernment of spirits. It's not psychological although it can have psychological overtones. It is prayer.

I won't go on with this but if you find it is useful, please let me know.

And as Jesus says beware of greed in all its forms.