

**Gospel: Matthew 13:44-46**

Jesus said to his disciples:

"The Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field,  
which a person finds and hides again,  
and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.  
Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant  
searching for fine pearls.  
When he finds a pearl of great price,  
he goes and sells all that he has and buys it."

**Homily Transcript: Living in Gratitude**

**\*\*RAW TRANSCRIPT\*\***

Jesus offers us two analogies in today's gospel of what the kingdom of heaven is like these are familiar images are suspect for many of us but let's spend some time reflecting on the images that Jesus gives us the kingdom of heaven is like a person who finds a treasure buried in the field kingdom of heaven is like a merchant search of fine pearls have a friend who has a background in art history and who is going to a garage sale and found an old painting among a stack of many old paintings recognized its value took it to a collector and sold it for hundreds of thousands of dollars she was a woman of some integrity and so she went to the person for whom she bought it at the garage sale for five dollars and split the proceeds and happy to say that the Jesuits of Ireland were rummaging through their basement a number of years ago and he found a series of old paintings many of which were not of any value what they found one that looks particularly interesting they are to the national Museum of Ireland and they discovered that it was a lost Caravaggio worth millions of dollars the point I'm proud of is they didn't cash it out for millions of dollars but they put it on permanent loan to the national Museum of Ireland these two analogies of their something in us that loves to search for the buried treasure some of you may be familiar with the television show on PBS antique roadshow which is all about people going into their basements for their closets or their accent finding old artifacts from families and then bringing it to see whether it's a value or not Jesus plays on these analogies of a person searching in the field and finding something of real value of merchants searching and with a keen eye being able to pick out that which is valuable from that which is not there every day analogies the point to this reality of the treasure that is buried inside each one of us will we pay to uncover that treasure the great sayings are those who are found that treasure and pursued it with all of their mine Francis of Assisi giving up a life of privilege so that he could pursue God's treasure through life of poverty is companion Sinclair similarly from a wealthy family who gave up everything enjoyed insults and humiliation to pursue that pearl of great price and Ignatius Loyola who gave up a privileged life a military career for the sake of focusing on what he believed was most important in our feast day today sale finances giving up his life as a lawyer because he found something more valuable now all of those professions are wonderful and they can lead us to God but the problem is that we get distracted is not we focus not on the treasure not on the Pearl we focus on other kinds of things because we are constantly getting distracted as a young man I remember reading in high school this famous short story by the French author Dean 4 song is called the necklace was about me who is working working for a wealthy woman who had all kinds of fashionable objects and the need was invited to auspicious banquet one day and the

object and she bought a lovely dress and it needed a pearl necklace and her math her mistress on this wonderful pearl necklace and so she asked if she could borrow it to the ball and she wore it and she was the belle of the ball but inadvertently the necklace broke and she lost it how can she ever go back to her mistress and say that she had lost this incredibly valuable pearl necklace so she went to a shop and she took out a loan and she purchased an identical necklace and gave it to her mistress and her mistress never knew the difference but you labored for the decades of her life wearing her fingers to the bone to be able to repay the debt and finally after she had repaid that that she went to her mistress and she said she confessed the story that she had broken the necklace that she had had borrowed and that she had bought a replacement and then her mistress looked at her with sad eyes and said only child that necklace that I gave you was worthless paste was an imitation those weren't real pearls should spend her life savings for nothing is not like many of us we get confused we miss the mark we focus on that which is transitory weather than that which is lasting we focus on that will which will give us immediate pleasure but not lasting joy we focused on power privilege for Steve's possessions we think that this is what's going to make us happy we think that this is what's going to make our spouse happy we think that this is what can make our children happy in the end it's worthless paste pearls and Augustine wrote long ago our hearts are restless and they will not rest until they rest in you oh Lord there is buried inside each one of us treasure a pearl of great price we want to spend our lives purchasing that which cannot be bought with money which can only be opened and received with a gracious and loving heart theologians talk about the analogy of already and not yet the kingdom of God is already here it is already within us it is within our grasp it's meant to be lived and enjoyed daily and yet it's also been on DOS and it takes a lifetime to fully appreciate it's already here it's not yet fully realized to live each day in gratitude for what God is giving has given and will continue to give to live in confidence of God's love for our lives when all is said and done is a love story is written in the song of songs I saw him whom my heart desires to search for that love beyond all reckon you mentioned several times this summer I'm very conscious of celebrating 50 years as a Jesuit keep reflecting on that reality and I was thinking this morning as I was praying over this reading of myself as a young man of 18 trying to decide what I was going up pursue in my life last week I was at Georgetown visiting a friend the flagship University of the Jesuits and is a young man I wanted to be a doctor and I was accepted into the premed program at Georgetown as I was walking around the campus I was just remembering visiting the campus with my dad and mom and my brothers and sisters and thinking yeah this is where I want to go to school I want to be a doctor but there was a nagging inside my heart that just never felt quite felt like that was the right choice and that nagging wouldn't go away I decided instead to turn down this the the scholarship that that I've received and to enter the Jesuits as a young man of 18 I remember this discernment really clearly I said before life is truly about the search for the eternal enemy focus my life on finding God in all things and limited use my and use the energy and whatever intelligence that God has given me nonhealing people's bodies but in helping them to heal their souls came to me so clearly in the midst of a retreat was like I was standing on a mountaintop and I could see my whole life unfolding to be sure that's part of the reason why I think I'm at the belle of the retreat house and I value retreats so much as it when we step away from my lie sometimes we see things clearly but then when we enter back into the everydayness of life we get lost in the twists and turns many times I said to make the right right choice my confused and like my going in the right direction but when we take that time to step back and decide what's really important was really of lasting value in our lives through your marriages through my own religious life whether that's is a single person divorced married widowed whatever our state in

life we are called to holiness is Francis reminds us in his latest encyclical writing that holiness is not in limitation of any other person rDNA is unique are some friends are unique God wants us to find holiness in the ordinariness of our lives it's a long story that Jesus calls us into deep intimate relationship in the circumstances of our lives it's never too late to say yes to the Lord's invitation the principle and foundation of the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius I quoted for you many times just and with this prayer adapted from St. Ignatius by Jacqueline Bergen and sister Marie Swan Lord my God when your love spilled over into creation you thought of me I am of love from love for love that my heart all God always recognize cherish and enjoy your goodness in all of creation direct all that is in me toward your praise teach me reverence for every person all things energize me in your service or God let nothing ever distract me from your love neither health nor sickness wealth or poverty honoring or dishonor long life nor short life me I never seek nor choose to be other than you intend and wish