

## Harvest 2017 - 8th October 17 - Fr Michael

I learnt a great new word this week and I will share it with you all today - it's going to be really useful in your life and may change your whole future!

It's '**pleonexia**' a Greek word which means greed, covetousness, "more" and "to have".

It's when people want more and more of something until it ruins them and makes them ill. It is an illness of 'acquiring things which leads to wanting even more and even what doesn't belong to them.' Some times people want things that they have no right whatsoever to have. Those things can become so important that they take the place of God, and to worship things, and not God, leads to another good word to know - '**idolatry**.' We might even use God to obtain money rather than use money to serve God.

Pleonexia - is a useful word. It describes the farmer in Jesus' story really well. The people listening to Jesus would have thought him a fool. He had plenty, but rather than share his excess (all the extra grain he had), he builds bigger barns to keep it in. He lives for himself, congratulating himself for being so very clever, he is really good at planning for the future! - except he goes and dies. I wonder if his pleonexia had anything to do with that? Do you remember I said that such greed can make you ill!

The farmer is unable to know what is enough until he reaches the point of too much. He hoards food in his enlarged barns with no regard to those who are needy, who are ill and in need of help - he puts bigger and bigger barns in the place of God.

There was lots of good things in our first reading! A good land, streams, springs, waters, wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives, honey, iron, copper. All good things given by God to the people called the Israelites, but they wanted it all to themselves, and they wanted more of it - so they could pass it all on to their children and by doing that they could live on through their children. They forgot God in the equation - that these things were God's, given by him for their use and to be shared with everyone. They thought they were so very clever - they were patting themselves on the back - "didn't I do well - this is my power, my might, my wealth - I did this all by myself!" "Well no you didn't - God gave you good things, food, materials for clothing! Treasure!

But he also wants us to have treasure in heaven, treasure of a heavenly kind and when we pray 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,' we are praying that heaven is here on earth in the form of caring, loving, being joyful and sharing. The kingdom is both in the future and right

here now when we treat those in need from our generosity and our abundance. Harvest gives us the reminder that pleonexia is not a good trap to fall into. Sharing, caring and loving others is the healing treatment for pleonexia. Sharing from our abundance is what we do when we support the Food Bank, as we do today. Caring for our planet earth, not using more than is our share - is also a good place to start. Giving to other people in need - is a great follow up treatment. Spreading love is a great way to inoculate ourselves and others with the prevention possible to beat down - **pleonexia**. Love is the antidote.

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