
20 Tuesday

TUESDAY, 20th WEEK of YEAR
Feast of St

Bernard

Ezekiel 28:1-10

Ps Deut. 32: 26-28, 30, 35-

36

Matt. 19: 23-

30

This gospel, about the difficulty if not impossibility of a rich person entering the kingdom of God, puzzles a lot of people. It not only puzzled but even astounded Jesus' disciples ---- they really couldn't understand it. For, like many modern people including even some Christians, Jewish people in Jesus' time saw wealth as a sign of blessing, of being favoured by God. In today's world economy, being rich or getting rich is the highest ambition of many people, and they then tend to look down on, ignore, treat as unimportant or unworthy of respect people or even whole countries which aren't wealthy. Because wealth so easily leads to self-importance and to arrogant pride. Christians have tried to "explain away" Jesus' words about camels and needle-eyes, with various theories about what He really meant. But the image He used is very clear and simple. And His message is clear too: it's only by God's power that anyone can enter His kingdom. You cannot "buy" entry, you cannot blackmail the Lord, you cannot hold on to anything as being "yours", you cannot rely on anything or any one except God, if you really wish to enter the kingdom. Money is only the most obvious example of things we "possess", hold on to, because we think they give us security or comfort or value or strength or power. In my case, the "riches" that could prevent me entering into the kingdom may not be money.... it might be other gifts of God which I consider as "mine". Is there something I'm not really prepared to detach myself from, to "give up", for Jesus' sake ?

Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous.....to give and not count the cost.....

Text word-count: 288