

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?! - In today's Gospel text, we hear about a 4th quality/characteristic that we "MDs" share – that is, the commitment to be creative and trustworthy care-takers of the resources we have from God.

In today's text, Jesus uses another word for "care-taker" – steward! In the ancient world this person (either a slave or an employee) was basically a manager of someone else's business. The rich man was interested in the "big picture" and relied upon the steward to "deal with the details".

In this case – judging from the yields of produce, etc. – this rich man really was enormously rich! So rich that very likely, he really "didn't even miss" all what he was owed. His approval of the steward was not so much about being kind of a "cheat" but about being creative --- because the master came out being warmly regarded by those who "caught a break"; he may have lost a little money, but he wound up looking really good in their eyes and gained stronger relationships! "Make friends for yourselves with dishonest wealth so that, when it fails, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings"!

We know that Medical Doctors are held in positions of great trust – and we depend upon their ability to "think outside the box" or simply "beyond their medical text book" to diagnose and treat us. So, too, are Missionary Disciples – God has placed each of us in a position of great trust as partners/co-workers with God for the critically important work of supporting the continual unfolding of God's Kingdom --- and Jesus is encouraging us to be a little creative with how we live and what we do with all that is entrusted to us!

Of course, most of us would not think of ourselves as being in the "rich guy" category where money really does not matter all that much – most of us have to work really hard and carefully manage tight household budgets. That is unless, of course, we think about what daily life is like for Father Alexis and his parishioners in Haiti; or what life is like in war-torn Ukraine; or what life is like in starving villages in Africa; or what life is like in violent neighborhoods in our own communities!

What Jesus in Luke's Gospel is teaching us is that – like Medical Doctors, being Missionary Disciples requires us to consider: 1. To what extent am I really "other-focused" and 2. To what extent am I willing to "personally invest" my life in what really matters and 3. To what extent am I really passionate about looking for who might be over-looked by everybody else and 4. to what extent am I both creative and trustworthy in being a steward of all the blessings that God has shared with me --- four qualities/characteristics of "MDs"!

And, the call of today's Gospel to be a creative and trustworthy steward makes for a "perfect transition" for us here at Saint Ann Church --- because for the next few Sundays we will be taking a closer look at just what this "stewardship call" is all about!