

## FR. KEVIN DILLON'S HOMILY DATED 13TH OCTOBER 2018

Now, I've got to make sure I say this correctly, even if I probably won't. But the mission that we have just had this week was terrific and it went extremely well and very grateful to Fr. Ray Sanchez for his leadership and commitment to the mission all through the week. But, there is a tiny little but, it's only very personal but, it made for a very busy week and because of that, I didn't get to the MotorClassica, at the Exhibition Buildings – the big end was yesterday and yesterday was the only day I might have a chance and too many things built up during the week so I didn't manage to go out. Hopefully, maybe next year. As you may have picked up, I am a bit of a car freak, sometimes being called a “rev-head”.

Way back, I think I heard or read in the news – the movie “*Bullet*” with Steve McQueen was made. Its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this week and this year. (*Refers to pic on slide*) That's Steve McQueen in his 1968 fast-back mustang. And the current mustangs, which are selling like absolute hotcakes – by the way, there is one parked in my driveway a few times a week but it is not mine, if only it was. Anyway, it was one of the greatest car chase ever filmed in that movie and I and maybe 6 other trillion young people must have pined after one of those fast-back mustangs. Well, maybe one of these days...you'll never know...but not at this stage. However, they are vulnerable. I don't know who the owner was, it was in America but I really cried in my heart for the owner of this mustang (refer to pic on slide with a completely burnt mustang). Can you imagine if you have saved and sweated and looked here, there and everywhere and gone into debt for the next 100 years to buy one of those cars. That's the same model as the 1967-68 that Steven McQueen had – that is the exact car. But imagine it got burned out in a fire? How would you feel? You could say you couldn't care less for a 1967-68 mustang, I could only tell you how I would feel if that was me.

Have a think of what you would miss so much if you have worked and slaved and saved for something and in a moment, it was gone – it would have been stolen, damaged, it would have been crushed, it would have been set on fire. Whatever. Ruined. How would you feel?

How do you feel about material possessions? Think of something that is yours – a material possession, which if you lost it, you would be absolutely cut to pieces. I want you to think of that specific thing. That might be the new carpet – the new cream carpet you got at home, and the very first day that you have it, your next-door neighbour comes in, and she says “Do you mind if I bring my little toddler in?” And you think “Errr...not sure about that” and he knocks something over – and it is black coffee or it was the red wine you were going to celebrate the new carpet with. You can say “we can clean this up” but what were you thinking inside when that really happens?

There is a connection we have to material things. They can run very deeply indeed.

A situation that I come across some time back, of someone who had been a victim of terrible abuse when they had been at school. Post-traumatic stress was just terrible. This was a lady – she had to move back with her mother and her mother had a display case of china dolls that she made and dressed – it was years of work that went into it. Something went wrong with the daughter suffering from PTSD (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder), and one day, she just lost it. Destroyed the lot of her mother’s china dolls. True story. Even though the mother had tried to be supportive, tried to be helpful, tried to give all the sympathy and practical help that she could, she couldn’t get over it. And the relationship between the mother and daughter was damaged forever. Even right up to the mother’s death. That’s the connection that we can have to material things. For any number of reasons, probably all of them bad, there may be one of them good if we give them away for the right reason, our severance from those precious things, what are the few of our favourite things? Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens – that’s fine. You can get raindrops any day but you can’t get a 68 mustang any day, and you can’t get a collection that you have built up for 20 years spent hours of your life attending to it and so on, you can’t get that back.

So, how do we shape up in that field? I mentioned that of course, because that gospel is a real challenge to us. It is probably one of the most uncomfortable gospel stories we have. I'm sure we can listen to it but it is not one of the stories that we want to enter into.

The Unforgiving Servant, we can do that alright – we can forgive people etc etc. but in terms of this story, he comes along to Jesus and he asked the question “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” You know the old adage, ‘never ask a question unless you have a pretty good idea of the answer’. This is one of the occasions. He had no idea what Jesus was going to ask of him. He thought Jesus was going to say to him “come along and listen to me, be good to other people, or maybe cut down on your alcohol intake for awhile or whatever.” “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said “Give away everything you have” and he is devastated. He didn't go away sad, he was absolutely cut to the quick, devastated he was. Because somehow, Jesus had honed in on the one thing that he just couldn't manage. He might have climbed the highest mountain or swam the deepest ocean for Jesus but to give away all his possessions....and he was a good guy. He has said “I've kept all the commandments, I've been a good person” and Jesus doesn't dispute that for one second but he said “I can't do it. Sorry Jesus, but I can't do it. I can't let go of all these favourite things.”

So let us put ourselves in the picture. This is the hard part. That is why we don't like this gospel. Imagine ourselves before Jesus. And somehow or other, we learned nothing from this question and we asked the question, “What must I do?” and we wait for the answer. So the real question is, what is the answer we most NOT want to hear. “Jesus you can ask me to do anything but not this”. It is different for each one of us but it is an important question because it is what we cling on to. It doesn't have to be a material possession. Can be a friendship that is somehow taken us to the wrong direction, can be a habit, or an addiction or it can be an ambition, climbing the corporate ladder or whatever and we spent years trying to do it and we are almost there. What if we asked of Jesus, that we have worked our way up the company's ladder where you are and He says “I want you to give it all away.” Could you do that?

It is a great story but it is more than a story. It is a challenge. It is an enormous challenge. The enormity of it depends on ourselves. Only we can answer for ourselves. I've got to look at my life and everyone of us have got to do the same. And we ask ourselves, if we ask that question of Jesus "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" What is the answer we least want to hear?

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.