

Homily
Memorial of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary
Friday of the 32nd Week in OT
November 17, 2023

How many television sets do you have in your house? How many cars in your driveway? How many cell phones?

Although our children are grown and out of the house, in their own homes with their own TV's, cars and cell phones, we still have four TV's, two cars and two cell phones.

When I was a kid, fifty years ago, we had one TV, one car and one telephone with a really long and tangled cord. When my dad was a kid, eighty years ago, they had no TV, a car with no AC, and a phone that they shared with a neighbor. Does anyone remember party lines?

Our lives have gotten exponentially better due to technology. God commanded us to learn how the world works, and subdue the earth for the betterment of all people. Sadly, every time a new technology is introduced, it is quickly used for disordered pleasures, even though it does positively impact us in the long run.

With all that said, how do we use the benefits of our ingenuity? Do we use it for our own pleasure? Do we use it to distract us from the rest of the world? Or do we use it to glorify God?

I spend way too much time on YouTube. When I'm hungry, and even when I'm not, I simply go to the fridge or the pantry and eat. When I pull up a browser to do research for my homily or work, I often get distracted and lose myself in clickbait articles full of useless trivia.

We are blessed with many comforts and useful resources. But how are we using them?

Today, we celebrate the Memorial of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, born into royalty in 13th century Hungary, married at age 14, had three children, and died in 1231 just before her 24th birthday. She had a full life of love and struggles. But she is mostly known for her charity.

She is the patron saint of Bakers, Catholic Charities & the Secular Franciscan Order. Pope Benedict XVI praised St. Elizabeth as a "model for those in authority." She used her wealth and influence to help the poor, joining the Secular Franciscan Order and caring for those in the hospital she founded.

Jesus reminds us today of the choices we have and the consequences of those choices. We are blessed by both the gifts God has given us and by the ingenuity of our brothers and sisters throughout history. If we focus on these gifts and not on God, we miss out.

What God has in store for us is infinitely better than what this world can offer. God wants us to use this world to glorify Him and bless our brothers and sisters. The choice is ours.

As John clearly states in his first letter, “If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him?”

We all have worldly means. Yes, God wants us to enjoy these means, and what better way to enjoy them than to share them to the best of our ability. Then we can share what God wants for us in His heavenly banquet throughout eternity.