



**Message from Fr. Leandro "Lines" Dela Cruz**

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**In the 1916 poem “The Road Less Traveled,” Robert Frost ends his thoughts with this line: “I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.” As always, one can take from the poet’s words a truth applicable to oneself. May I suggest that the thought here presents food for thought for any Christian? Call this menu item a type of “consciousness exam” as opposed to an examination of conscience.**

**Certainly, the road that began with our baptism is one that invites detours. No reason to be surprised that the world provides attractive options for travel. Our Lord Jesus Christ left His footprints on the One Best Way because He walked it first all by Himself. No, it isn’t an easy path. You will see His blood prominent on the path.**

**This Sunday’s readings and Gospel spell out some details just in case we need concepts made explicit. The Book of Wisdom contains the prayer of that Old Testament paragon of wisdom, King Solomon, who prays to make the right decision for his life in the face of multiple alluring options. Those make for a contemporary list as well, namely: power, riches, health, comeliness, and light. Who of us has not felt the tug of war they create in our hearts as we try to stay on the path?**

**The Letter to the Hebrews comes across as a commentary on what our Lord declares. The Word challenges us to be attached to Him alone, which includes, of course, His values.**

**In the Gospel, when that unnamed wealthy man knelt down before Truth itself, he got God's opinion about riches. Our man got a shock to his lifelong belief system: "Go sell what you have, and give to the poor." While we're not shocked so many centuries later, we are challenged.**

**The added element here is the courage it takes to be different from "the herd." To "take the road less traveled by." So our disappointed questioner stands up, perhaps looking sad and a bit perplexed. Then he walks back, figuratively speaking, to the familiar "road" that nearly everybody in his time and place traveled by.**

**Meanwhile, the disciples were amazed. All of their devout Jewish lives heretofore they were taught that riches are a blessing from God. and not an obstacle to His favor. They get Jesus' funny image of the camel and the eye of the needle. We get it too, but how many of us laugh shakily, knowing that what Jesus said is aimed at any materialism in us. Though we don't dare voice it, we may think of saying something to Jesus like "Lord, with all due respect, let's be practical here." He just smiles at us saying nothing. He knows that we can always change paths.**

**God Loves You.**