

William Randolph Hearst was born in 1863, and was a famous ... maybe infamous ... newspaper publisher whose journalistic holdings reached nearly 30 newspapers across the nation.

One of Hearst's enduring legacies is Hearst Castle. Construction began in 1919 on 240 thousand acres of land overlooking the Pacific Ocean at San Simeon.

Each room is furnished with art and antiques brought over from Europe. Hearst was such a passionate collector of antiques and artistic works, that aside from his castle at San Simeon which was filled with all sorts of priceless treasures; he also had warehouses full of untold treasure.

Supposedly, while reading a magazine on art, he came across a photo of a reproduction of a particular work of art. He called his agent in New York to locate and purchase the original work. After several months, the agent had failed to locate the work ... and Hearst fired him on the spot; hiring a private detective to continue the search.

After nearly two years, and over \$100,000 financing this search, the detective returned with good news and bad news.

The good news, of course, was that he had found the painting.

The bad news was, that it lay in one of Hearst's warehouses ... having been purchased over seven years before. The treasure he had worked so hard to possess ... had been his all along. If only he'd known.

Today is the Solemnity of the Ascension of Our Lord. In two of the readings, we hear accounts of Jesus' ascension 40 days after His resurrection on Easter.

In the Second Reading, St. Paul gives a theological account of what this should mean for Christian believers.

St. Paul prays that his readers might receive a "*Spirit of wisdom and revelation*" so as to gain knowledge in four specific areas so that Christian believers might be united with Christ in glory.

(1) The first is that we might know God, and His Son Jesus Christ.

There are, of course, two sorts of knowledge. We can know "about"

someone - facts and figures, measurements and statistics. But to truly *know* a person ... requires an experiential knowledge ... living with them, walking with them ... day by day. If we are to truly know God and His Son, we must work on that relationship every day.

- (2) The second is that we might know God's call. Each of us received God's call on our lives at Baptism. In this particular text, St. Paul uses the term "enlightenment" which in the early Church was synonymous with Baptism. Because we are baptized ... we are enlightened by Christ and the Holy Spirit. And each and every one of us, in our unique way, must live out the call ... as Apostles in our own time ... in our own day and age. This call is not some divine burden cast on our shoulders, but rather should give us hope.
- (3) The third is that we might know God's riches - our inheritance, as sons and daughters of God ... brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. Additionally, because we are united to Christ as members of His Body, we have become God's possession ... part of the abundance of wealth ... and sharers in His grace, love, and mercy.
- (4) The fourth, and final area of knowledge, is that we might know God's power. As members of Christ's Body, we are united to Him ... and He is united with His Father in glory ... and so, God's power is active in us ... and through us. Through intercessory prayer, we are filled with "*the surpassing greatness of his power*" inasmuch as we are open to the action of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Without this knowledge, we might find ourselves wasting time and resources looking all over the world ... for the treasure we already share in Christ Jesus. The power and riches of God, which receive by believing in His Son and living out our Baptismal call.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray for a deeper outpouring of the "*Spirit of wisdom and revelation*" that we may better know God, hear and live out His call for each of us, and share in the treasure of His divine love and mercy and grace ... which are poured out on us by the power of the Holy Spirit.