

**EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
**Year A     March 2, 2014**

**Theme: Shopping with Jesus**

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This part of the Sermon on the Mount was surely spoken by Jesus right after Valentine's Day because Jesus must have been convinced to go shopping with Peter and Andrew as they purchased gifts for their wives.

Now remember Jesus came from the tiny backwoods hill town of Nazareth, so taking him to the Capernaum Market District Giant Eagle and the Tiberias Galleria Mall would have been a real eye opener for him.

"Holy Cow," exclaimed Jesus, "they must have slaughtered twenty head of beef to fill that counter. And look at all that fish! They surely didn't get from your boat, Peter."

"Nope," said his friend, "some of it came from as far away as Cyprus and Crete."

"All that bread! You could feed five thousand people with all that bread? And what do they do with the leftovers?" asked an incredulous Jesus.

Peter picked up a couple of loaves along with a huge roast and headed for the flower stand; he found a bunch of lilies he knew his wife especially liked, even if they were pretty expensive.

"You're going buy those?" Jesus asked. "Let me just pick some in the field on the way home."

"No way. You bachelors will never understand," said Peter as he moved toward the bakery.

“Eight chocolate Napoleons. The big ones with whipped cream,” Peter told the lady behind the counter. Jesus stood there with his mouth open looking at the prices of the baked goods, including the Napoleons.

They met up with Andrew at the check out counter; he had the veggies, some multi-colored fingerling potatoes and a couple of bottles of wine to complete their special Valentine dinner.

Jesus nearly choked when he saw the check out total.

Next it was a drive down along the lake to the big Roman city of Tiberius and the new Galleria Mall there: Andrew headed to cosmetics for perfume for his wife while Peter was going upstairs to lingerie for his.

Jesus decided to stick with Andrew this time.

He couldn't believe that half the store was devoted to nothing but smells people put on themselves, some of them for men no less.

Then there was stuff for around the eyes and on lips and powders and creams of every kind.

Jesus just roamed wide-eyed as Andrew looked for what he wanted.

Sales clerks kept offering to spray stuff on him but he just shook his head and kept moving; it was like he was in a different world.

Finally Andrew, having made his purchase, grabbed his arm and steered him to an elevator.

They found Peter holding up a skimpy pink something or other and looking at two other matching smaller pieces on the glass countertop “Yes,” he said, “I think she will like these very much,” and handed the sales lady his United Bank of Jerusalem credit card.

He winked at his brother and said: “I know I'll like her in them very much!”

On the way home, Jesus was at first very quiet; then he said: **“How can you two serve both God and Mammon, money?”**

“Come on, Jesus,” said Andrew, “Now you live with us. You know we don’t live like this or eat like this or spend like this all year. Valentine’s Day is once a year when we show our wives how much we love them.”

“Right,” added Peter, “we don’t love God any less because this one day we splurge on our wives. You know we don’t usually obsess over what we wear or go crazy over our meals. We dress simply and we eat simply most of the time.”

“Isn’t that what you’re teaching us?”

“But looking at those stores, all that stuff, and all those people buying all that stuff: some on them must spend an awfully lot of time and money fussing over what they wear and what they eat,” said Jesus.

“And they run up mighty big credit card bills,” added Andrew.

**“Our lives are surely more than food and our bodies more than clothing,”** said Jesus.

“Absolutely,” the brothers said in unison.

“Then why do people spend so much time and energy worrying about food and clothing: what they’re going to wear and what they’re going to drink and what they’re doing to eat?” wondered Jesus aloud.

“That’s the secular, pagan way of life, not our kingdom way.”

“We know better:

---we know material stuff, and satisfying the sensuous appetites alone will not satisfy our hungry hearts;

---we know the time and energy and money uselessly spent on clothing and food and such has been wasted and could have been spent on the kingdom and God's righteousness."

"Except," insisted Andrew, "for special occasions like Valentine's Day."

"Okay," smiled Jesus, "except for special occasions like Valentine's Day."

"After all," said Andrew, "it's like our dad use to tell us, Peter."

The two brothers held up their various packages and repeated together: "Happy wife, happy life."