

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

Is life about money and things?

By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

The man was rich, but not rich enough. He owned a huge farm, but wanted a still larger farm. His harvest was good, but he was not satisfied.

The rich farmer sat for a long time under a tree on a hill overlooking his farm. He loved to sit there and think of all the money he was making.

"I deserve it," he said to himself with a smile. "Now I can buy just about anything I want. I worked hard. Now I can enjoy myself. That's what life's all about, isn't it?"

But he still was not satisfied. He looked at the barns and grain bins. They were larger than those on any other farm. But he saw the huge stacks of grain in the fields. There was much too much grain to fit in the barns.

"What shall I do?" he asked



himself. His stomach tightened as he worried. His heart beat faster as an exciting idea rose in his mind. "I know what I'll do," he said to himself. "I'll pull down those barns. I'll build even bigger barns. I'll build still larger bins."

He leaned against the tree and dozed off. He dreamed of big new barns. He dreamed of huge

grain bins filled to overflowing. He dreamed of the money he would get. "What a life I'll have," he thought as he dreamed. "I'll have money to buy whatever I want. I'll have lots of fun. People will look up to me. They will think I'm powerful and great because I am rich."

Then he woke up. His dream ended. His stomach was tight as a knot. He had everything, but was not satisfied.

"Relax," he told himself. "You have plenty saved up for years to come. Enjoy yourself. That's what life is all about anyway. Eat well. Drink the best wines. Enjoy yourself."

He was feeling rather good about himself. He looked again at the fields, the stacks of straw, the barns and grain bins. He imagined how the new, larger barns and bins would look. It's all mine," he mused aloud. "And I'm still young enough to enjoy

it."

Just then God spoke to him in his heart. "You fool!" God said. "You foolish little man. So that is what life is all about. This very night you will die. Who will get all the money you have saved up? Who will enjoy the good things you worked so hard for?"

The rich farmer felt faint. And he felt afraid.

"What good will all this do me tomorrow, if I die tonight? Who will get it all? Maybe there's more to life than money, power and pleasure!"

In a parable long ago, Jesus told of a man like this.

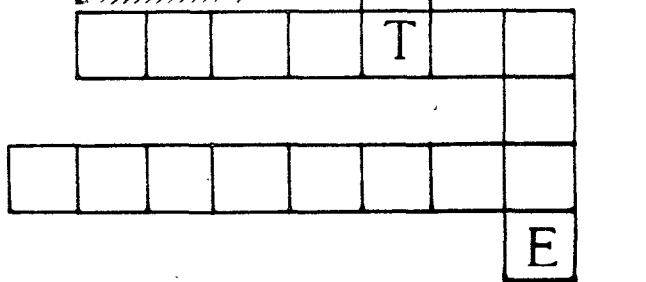
Story Hour biblical quotes — this week from Luke 12:13-21 — are paraphrased.

(Ms. Manternach is the author of numerous catechetical books and articles for children.)

The Rich Farmer

Put these farm related words in the blocks to the right. They will only fit one way.

RAKE
PLOWS
TRACTOR
HAYSTACK
SILO
PIGLET



a game

a game

HOW ABOUT YOU?

Most people want to be happy. What makes people happy? What makes you happy? And what can you do to make others happy?

Children's Reading Corner

"A Solitary Blue" is a story by Cynthia Voigt in which something sad happens to a second-grade boy. Children and adults might read it aloud together and discuss it. Afterward they might think about what it means to love someone who isn't there to love you back. And they might talk about how much they love each other. In the story, the boy's mother has left home. He deals with what he understands of his situation the best he can. But he runs up against a hard question he must work out. This helps him make an important choice. The story is a moving journey into relationships among friends and within families. Part of its joy comes from the satisfying relationship that the boy and his father develop. Atheneum Publishers, 122 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017, 1983. Hardback, \$10.95.)



Forgiveness

The promise of God's forgiveness is fulfilled as Father Robert Whalen, S.J. hears the confession of a prisoner in the Federal Medical Prison in Springfield, Missouri. Father Whalen's message of forgiveness and the love of God help heal the pain of confinement for large numbers of repentant prisoners.

With help from the Catholic Church Extension, Father Whalen introduces prisoners to basic Christianity. It's a tough job in a hostile environment.

Father Whalen is part of a team of home missionaries who, together with Extension, pursue the vital and urgent task of evangelization here in the

United States. But the team is too small to do the job without help. It needs new members. It needs you.

Join us. Become a member of the Extension Society team. Although you won't be present in the home missions personally, your impact will be felt in this holy effort. Together we can bring the Word of Christ to those who don't have it.

Write for a free subscription to Extension magazine today and discover the difference you can make. Together, and with God's grace, we can achieve His missionary goals here in our own beloved country.



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EXTENSION Society
35 East Wacker Drive • Chicago, Illinois 60601