A fisherman had landed his catch of fish, cleaned his nets, and was resting by the water's edge, watching the sea, thinking about his day, and enjoying life.

A rich man came strolling by. He could see that the fisherman looked relaxed and peaceful, but asked him: "Why are you not working?"

The fisherman was surprised at being asked the question, and replied: "I've just finished unloading my catch for the day."

"But you've time to go out and get more fish", said the rich man.

"Why should I do that?" asked the fisherman.

"So that you can sell them and make more money", explained the rich man.

"But what would I do with the money?" asked the fisherman.

"You could buy a bigger boat," the rich man said.

"But why?" asked the fisherman.

"Obviously you could catch more fish and make even more money. Then you'd be rich," replied the rich man.

"Why would I want to be rich?" asked the poor fisherman.

"Then you'd be able to sit back and enjoy life!" remarked the rich man.

"But that's exactly what I'm doing now" said the fisherman, sitting by the water's edge.

Let us pray:

Lord,
I do not want to be selfish.
I do realise how important it is to value and appreciate myself, and I know that I need genuine love for myself if I am fully to love others.

Remind me of the importance of keeping time and space and quiet for myself, and remind me to respect the personal needs of others, too.

Lord God, you who call me by my name, I thank you for making me who I am.

Inspire me to grow as a genuine and sincere person with a positive attitude, right values, and a generous spirit. Amen.

Pope John Paul II has said:
"It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being'."

The Greek philosopher, Socrates (about 470-399 B.C.), looking in the market at many goods for sale, said: "How many things I have no need of."

"The person is nearest to God who needs the fewest things," said the Roman philosopher Seneca, 4B.C. - 65A.D.

"... Better deem t'have lived to be, than to have died to have."
(Samuel Daniel, 1563-1619, in 'Musophilus')

See also 1 April; 3,12,27 July; and the footnotes for 10 August.

Do not worry; Follow me; God's Spirit is in my heart; O Lord all the world