

September 30, 2009

Dear Friends

I got a bite of the 'Big Apple' this month. New York is an exhilarating city of energy, ingenuity and ambition - all the superlatives. Visiting during the 9-11 season one cannot but share the trauma associated with the 'towers'. Around the corner from 'ground zero', down from Wall Street, a Brazen Bull reflects the ambient spirit, an attitude that appreciates only growth, yet bookstores in the region are stuffed with opinions on why that bubble burst.



| Too Much | Not Enough |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Cost Centredness | Value Centredness |
| Short-Term Speculation | Long-Term Investment |
| Complexity | Simplicity |
| Counting & Box ticking | Trust |
| Salesmanship | Stewardship |
| Focus on Things | Commitment |
| "Success" | Character |

The story is told of a billionaire, who boasted to Joseph Heller that he earned more in a day from stock trading than all the royalties on his book, Catch-22. Heller response was that he had something that the billionaire would never have: - **ENOUGH!** The ability to discern

sufficiency is a subtle grace on the road to contentment, a value much depreciated in our consumerist society.

How much food is enough? How much money is enough? How many household gadgets are enough? How much affection is enough?

John Bogle, founder of the Vanguard mutual index linked fund has been a life-long advocate of the real economy and the longer view. He contrasts some of the tensions as shown. Interestingly the insufficiencies are all in the spiritual ambit

Our situation may well have been described by the ancient prophet Haggai: *Ye have sown much, and bring in little; you eat, but **have not enough**; you drink, but are not filled with drink; you are clothed, but are not warm; and those that earn wages put them into bags with holes.*

By contrast, the promise of Malachi assures us that abundance comes from right priorities:

*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there **shall not be room enough** to receive it.*

For some, there are times of shortage and faith testing, this we cannot deny. Yet our task is to build spiritual and communal value in the name of our Saviour from whence all blessings flow.

Thank you for being committed to this task.

Best regards

Victor