

Homily
Friday of the 11th Week in OT
June 23, 2023

I'm not a hoarder; I just like to keep those things that I may need next week or next year or maybe twenty years from now. My wife is currently going through our garage and eliminating anything and everything that we haven't used in the last year. Within reason, of course. She hasn't thrown away my tools, at least as far as I know. But she is getting rid of our many suitcases. I didn't realize just how many we had gathered over the years.

It's amazing to me how much stuff I keep; old photos, birthday and Father's Day cards, tools and office supplies, all that have perceived value, sentimental, functional, esthetic, financial. My dad is divesting himself of his valued items, wanting to 'keep them in the family.' It's amazing to me, in light of today's readings, how much value we put on 'stuff.'

My wife has the right idea, the same idea we get from today's readings; material stuff, the clutter in our homes, is like clutter in our mind. When we surround ourselves with material things, we block ourselves off from what is really important.

We can't take it with us. We can't take old photos or that antique grandfather clock handed down or our financial portfolio we've worked so hard to maximize. And when we focus on those things, the things we think make us happy, we prevent ourselves from focusing on what real happiness is; love. Loving God and loving our neighbor.

Today's Gospel talks about the eye. What we see is what we focus on and what we focus on is where our hearts lie. If we keep our gaze on and crave and hold onto the material things of this world, we miss out on those things that truly matter.

Jesus says, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...but store up treasures in heaven."

The gifts of this world God gave us to enjoy and share, not covet and hoard. And when we properly enjoy God's gifts, we are sharing ourselves with our brothers and sisters, we are building each other up, we are storing treasures in heaven.

Soon, thanks to my wife, our garage will soon be clear of clutter. And when I clear my mind of the clutter of this world, love of material things, I open the way for grace to enter my mind and my heart. I am open to the love God so wants me to embrace and share. It is through love that we open the way for light to brighten the way, eliminating darkness.

This is what happens when we come to Mass; we open ourselves to the very love that is the God of the Universe, entering our very bodies, in Word and in Sacrament, becoming one with us and us with Him. We see heaven through the eyes of the Creator. And we see just what is possible when we focus on storing treasures in heaven, not in our garage.