

On this Sunday right throughout the world, there will be a variety of reactions towards what we heard in today's Gospel.

For some, Jesus' words shall come as a shock, for they believe that all what counts in their lives is the accumulation of their assets, their houses, their properties, their financial investments, their cars, their boats, etc.

Some will be deeply touched. They'll pursue the way they feel called to respond to God's love by virtue of knowing that growth in the love of God is better than all the riches of the earth.

Some may even respond in bizarre ways.

For example, some – among the extremely rich – to enjoy their wealth at a later time, will make plans to have their bodies frozen immediately following their deaths.

They'll do so in the hope of being resurrected at a later time when a cure can be found for their ills.

Some, after the celebration of the Mass, will go home and start working on their Last Will. They'll attempt to determine to whom their wealth should be distributed.

For others, the Word of God will enter one ear and go out the other.

They'll fail to perceive the spiritual wisdom of Jesus' words.

Considering all of these different reactions, possessions obviously have a strange influence on the human mind, even though they're transient, worthless and empty when seen against the backdrop of eternity.

For this reason, the Book of Ecclesiastes questions what we get from all the toil and strain that we endure under the sun, especially given that we must leave everything behind for someone else to enjoy after we die.

That is "**Vanity of vanities**" as we heard in the Book of Ecclesiastes today (cf. Ecc. 2:21-23).

What good is something if we cannot enjoy it?

It's no different than the rich man who built large barns to store all his grain and his goods, in the hope of relaxing, eating, drinking and being merry only to find on that very night, that his life was demanded of him (cf. Lk. 12:18-9).

In view of this, there's a reason we see our hard labour as 'work done in vain' because we cannot take it with us; rather, we have to leave it to an heir. We're invited to see life in this way, not that we should cease to make any effort to do good for others,

but to see that material labour differs greatly to spiritual labour.

Unlike the rich man who built large barns, people who strive for spiritual gains accumulate their recompense in Heaven.

Their rewards await them on Judgment Day.

Their spiritual treasures will never depart from them.

These are worthy considerations during *National Vocations Awareness Week* because today's society and the media places so much emphasis upon our *careers* and very little on our *vocations*.

It's easy to understand – unfortunate as it is – how money is often the key motivating factor behind our careers, but it's much harder to imagine religious sisters or brothers, priests, or married people who take their vocations seriously being motivated by anything else other than the love of God and love for those entrusted to their care.

If we thought more about our vocations, in addition to having a greater reward awaiting us in Heaven, we'd also be more fulfilled in the meantime.

St Paul affirms this today.

We heard his advice: "**Seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God**" (Col. 3:1).

Having been raised with Christ,

in Him, we find the perfect image of God.

Jesus is the perfect pattern of life for us who've been Baptised.

He's our reason for continuously seeking an interior renovation in His image as the new man.

Jesus is a 'straight shooter' when it comes to what treasures we should reject,

and what treasures we should accept: "**Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also**" (Mt. 6:19-21).

Our greatest reward is when we're "**rich toward God**" (Lk. 12:21).

This being the case,

- *how much time do you put into discerning your vocation?* Or, if you're already living your vocation,
- *do you see that your greatest reward will come from how committed you are to your vocation, rather than to your career?*
- *In what way do you assist others to perceive and pursue their vocations?* These are good questions to ask during *National Vocations Awareness Week*.