

## A NOTE FROM FATHER EICKHOFF

*But God said to him,  
'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you;  
and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?'*  
Luke 12:20

This verse is taken from today's Gospel reading. The full reading includes Jesus' parable of the rich man who had many material possessions saved up and safely stored away. The rich man discovers – much too late – that his numerous possessions cannot preserve his life. Nor, can these possessions be of any use to him after his death. Everything he has stored up will go to someone else. Likely someone who did not work to acquire them.

Instead of relying on material possessions, Jesus tells us to rely on the love of God which cannot be taken away from us by any earthly force and which will remain with us even after earthly death. The wise man seeks to gain this greater and better possession. Now, we do not gain the love of God by seizing it or by earning it; rather we open ourselves to it by stripping away from ourselves everything within us that blocks us from receiving the love of God. Having experienced the love of God we then strive to retain our involvement with it by emulating God in all things by how we act towards God and our neighbor. This is the true way by which eternal treasure is safely stored for everlasting life.

How then do we strip away from ourselves everything that blocks us from experiencing the love of God? The first step is to recognize that we need to strip away from ourselves those things (emotions, vices, evil deeds) that block us from experiencing the love of God. The second step is to realize that we cannot by ourselves fully strip away both the things that block us from experiencing the love of God, and the ill effects within us that those effects have had upon our soul. We need the help of God. And God surely gives us this help through the gift of the Sacrament of Confession. With this Sacrament we receive the grace of God which strips away those things within us that block us from experiencing the love of God and this same grace also reorients our soul to God so that we may better resist the temptation to commit sinful actions that would recreate barriers within the soul to the love of God.

We realize that being fully oriented towards God and fully experiencing the love of God is far better for eternal life than any amount of material possessions (no matter how well stored and secured). To this end, the Sacrament of Confession is available on a frequent basis here at St. Anne. Confessions are heard every week on Saturday afternoons from 3.30pm to 4.30pm and every Wednesday evening from 7pm to 8pm.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Eickhoff