

If we say we love God, then we must mean it—and show it.

c-c-19th Sunday of OT 2025

Today marks the third anniversary of my coming to St. Joseph's as your pastor.

I will be honest and say I always knew I would be coming here as your pastor,

I have truly found it to be a treasure

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the gospel speaks about a treasure.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

It got me to thinking, where is our heart.

Often we do not know where our heart is until something serious happens.

There is an easy test to determine where your heart, and therefore your treasure is.

If someone in your family has an accident, what is the first thing you ask.

What kind of damage is there to the car . . . or . . . is everyone alright.

If the first question we ask is what kind of damage is there to the car,

it is a good indication that **things** are important to you.

If the first thing you ask is, "Is everyone alright."

It is a good indication that people are important to you.

I heard of a situation where a news crew was interviewing a woman

who was standing in front of her house, that had just burned to the ground.

They asked her, "How are you feeling."

Now think, and we have all seen similar interviews,

what would our response be if someone stuck a camera in front of our faces

just after we experienced a tragedy.

I'm willing to bet that most of us would say something like,

it was a tragedy, it will be hard to rebuild, but we will.

But this was not the response of the woman,

her response to the question, "How are your feeling" was "Absolutely wonderful."

My family is safe, my neighbours have been very welcoming,

and the community has come forth with a tremendous support.

The news reporter was taken back and ended the interview fairly quickly.

It seems good news does not sell, people are more interested in disaster.

But I have to admire the woman. She had her priorities right.

Her house and everything in it, admittedly very important to her, are just things.

They can be replaced.

But people, they are irreplaceable, once they are gone they are gone forever.

In many ways a fire can be the thief that comes in the middle of the night.

Accidents can also be thieves that come in the middle of the night.

I remember a month after I bought my very first brand new car.

I was in the Cypress Hills and racing to get to town to the bank before it closed.

A deer jumped in front of me and I slammed on the brakes,

and the car started swerving all over the road.

I don't know if you have ever had the experience of time slowing down in an accident but that happened to me,

I remember trying to regain control of my car and I remember saying,

"No God, not my new car."

Luckily God answered my prayer, and all that happened was I hit the ditch.

But it was an indication that I was more worried about my car than I was about me.
Nine years later, when I was in the seminary, I was in that same car
and I lost control in a terrible hailstorm.

Time once again slowed down, and I remember thinking,

Nine years ago I asked you to save my car, now I was praying,
“God I’m just about to be ordained a priest, you can’t let me get hurt.”
It took me nine years but I finally got my priorities straight.
People are more important than things.

In the gospel Jesus tell a parable about being ready.

Because we never know when we are going to be asked to be accountable.
The challenge is not to wait for a crises to set our priorities.
In the midst of a fire or an accident, it is often too late to change our priorities.

Take a moment to think about what your greatest treasure is—

a car, a house, your job/career, your family, your spouse, your parish, life itself,
the relationship we have with our God.

I heard a very interesting comment once, “People vote with their feet.”

It means if it is important to you, you will be there,
if it is not important to you will not be there.

Jesus may have well said in the gospel, Where your treasure is, there your feet will be also.

So the question we have to ask ourselves is “Where do I spend my time?”

I mean if our treasure is where our feet are, our treasure is where we spend our time.
Most of us will spend about a 1/3 of our time working 1/3 of our time sleeping
and a 1/3 of our time with our families.

But if a person spends more time at work than they do with their family,
it means one of two things,

they either like their work more than their families,
or they have to spend the extra hours at work to support their families.

But whenever someone says “I have to spend more time at work to support my family,”

I remember something Bishop Mahoney once said.

A women walked into his office wearing more gold than he had in the Cathedral.

But she was depressed. Her husband gave her everything,
jewelry, furs, cars, expensive holidays, a magnificent house,
but the one thing he did not give to her,
was the one thing she wanted the most—himself.

So often we are so busy trying to get everything done, that we forget about why we are doing it.

A husband can never be so preoccupied with his work, the farm, or his friends
that he forgets his wife and family.

I'm not married but I would be willing to bet any couple--where one spouse forgets the other,
will not stay together very long.

Families work toward common goals, not because they have to,
but because they love each other and they want to.

If we forget about the love, we are simply a gong booming, or a cymbal clashing.
The relationship that we have with our spouse
must be one in which our feet always bring us together.

It is no different from our relationship with our God.

If our feet do not bring us to church.

If our feet do not bring us to prayer,

if our feet do not bring us to do good works,

then it will not be long before we will have a broken relationship with Jesus.

I know many people have told me I spend wwwwwaaaaayyyy too much time in the church.

It is not because I am a work-a-holic.

It is because I love my ministry, and more importantly I love serving you.

Today marks my third year anniversary...please pray that my health holds out for another three years.