18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 2013

THEME: VANITY OF VANITIES

READINGS: Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23/ Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11/ Luke 12:13-21

By Very Rev. Fr. John Louis ([http://frlouis.com](http://frlouis.com/))

Just imagine admiring a beautiful mansion: its unique architecture, high quality glass windows and doors, and a fascinating roof crowning it all. Then, all of a sudden the mansion crumbled down. In a shock, the great losses of the investments of money, materials and efforts ran through your mind, as you wondered about why the mansion collapsed. Then, you soon got to know that the impressive building came down because of a weak or faulty foundation-substructure.

***Our life is like a building; our achievements and possessions are the superstructure of pillars, windows, doors, roof, etc. Our faith, hope and love determine the strength of our foundation-substructure.*** If our faith is not in the Living God, and our hope is in the false security of our riches, and our love is selfish, then we have a weak foundation-substructure. In this regard, all our achievements and possessions will come to nothing like the destruction of the mansion we imagined (above). Thus, Ecclesiastes says:

‘Vanity of vanities …  
Vanity of vanities! All things are vanity!

Here is one who has laboured with wisdom and knowledge and skill,  
and yet to another who has not laboured over it, he must leave property.

This also is vanity and a great misfortune’ (Eccl. 1:2; 2:21; first reading).

For this reason, Jesus says: ’Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich,  
one's life does not consist of possessions (Lk. 12; gospel reading).’

On the contrary, ***it is by anchoring our faith in the Living God, by hoping in the treasures of heaven, and by loving God and neighbour as Christ has taught us that we build a solid foundation-substructure. This is the kind of foundation-substructure that eternally sustains the beautiful superstructure of our achievements and possessions.***

Brothers and sisters, let us, therefore, seek first the heavenly kingdom (Mt. 6:33), ‘where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.’ Let us ‘think of what is above, not of what is on earth.’ Then, when Christ our ‘life appears … [we] too will appear with him in glory’ (Col. 3:1-5; second reading). Amen!