**Homily** **for the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*Rev. Francis D. Kim*

        Sometimes, life brings us to the point where we don’t see much hope for the future. If your are there right now, whatever the situation, whatever the reason, let me assure you that God cares and that, because of Him, your future can be different.

        Committing our lives to Jesus or renewing our commitment to Him doesn’t mean all our problems will suddenly vanish. We cannot undo the past, and when we have made unwise decisions, we often have to live with the consequences. But, isn’t it better to face the future with God than without Him? God loves you, and even when life is dark and uncertain, that truth will bring you encouragement and strength.

        Jesus know what you are going through, and He is ready to help you. So, commit your problems and your future into His hands. Ask Him to help you make wise decisions about your future and to follow Him everyday. So, Jesus says to us today in the Gospel, “Do not work for food that cannot last, but work for food that endures to eternal life.”

        He says to us a very sobering thought that everything; everything we now have will be gone someday; our home, our money, our clothes, our job, our career, our relationships, everything you and I own will be gone, passed on, worn out, used up, destroyed, gone. It is truth we simply cannot deny or avoid.

          In the Gospel today, the wise and caring voice of Jesus is warning us not to cling to such food that perishes, not to put our identity there, but rather, to work for something that is not perishable, something that endures both here on earth and into eternity.

        What is the food that endures for eternal life that Jesus is talking about? Love, justice, truth, forgiveness, mercy, fidelity, and compassion. These are some of the enduring things Jesus had in mind. These are the things that give us true joy here on earth and are our passport to heaven.

        A life of true joy and meaning is not driven by perishable material things and fleeting experiences, but by the nonperishable values and the truths of God. Yes, Jesus is right when He says without exception, everything we now own will be gone someday, and since we will be left with nothing material we now have, maybe we should ask ourselves an important question. What will be our spiritual legacy?

        When we go to meet Jesus in the final judgment, we leave behind everything we have and take with us everything we are and have become. Then, Jesus will not ask about our material possessions. He will ask questions like, did you feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the sick or the imprisoned? These are the questions that resonate here on earth and rebound in heaven.

        In the aftermath of the stunning miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish, people were looking for more bread and more wonders. Then, Jesus tries to draw them to seek something deeper. He calls it bread from heaven, living bread, and the bread of eternal life.

        Today’s Gospel invites us to make a place in our hearts for the Bread of Life, for Christ the true bread who came down from heave. He tells us as He told the crowd, “I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

         So, do not work for the food that perishes, but work for the food that endures to eternal life.