

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 31, 2016—It was an ancient ritual that always took place during the coronation Mass of a newly-elected Pope. As the new pontiff was being carried to the altar in the ceremonial chair, known as the SEDA GESTATORIA, the long procession would be stopped three times and the gilded chair carrying the newly elected pontiff would be set down in the aisle. The music and singing would stop and the entire assembly would hold a reverent silence. A simple monk dressed in his habit would then stand before the Holy Father and set afire some straw in a silver bowl, invoking the words: “SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI” meaning “SO PASSES THE GLORY OF THE WORLD.”

It was a pointed and visible reminder to the new Pope that all of this ceremony, all of the gilded vestments and lofty protocol, all of the glory of earth will some day pass and he, too, will be called before the throne of the Almighty to give an account of his life. It was a very visible reminder to the new Pontiff that he is a **supreme servant**, not a **lofty king**, and all worldly glory is but a fleeting moment.

My friends, that reminder to a new Vicar of Christ and the reminder of the Holy Gospel that we just heard [Luke 12:13-21] gives an identical message. Our dependence, whether we be pope or peasant, banker or child, teacher or student, young or old, should **not** be on worldly things, but rather on **heavenly** matters and the One who gives us life. So often, in the furious pace of our lives and in our efforts to soar to professional goals or achieve new heights and new success, we can be like our friend in that Gospel story and go along in life building the grain bins high, storing up all kinds of things, and yet forgetting the real essence of it all.

But, there is a very good reason why there are no trailer hitches on the back of hearses at Barrett-Carter or Quinn funeral homes and to-date, there has never been a U-HAUL behind a hearse because the fact is, we leave it all behind!

Yes, we can be easily tempted in our society today to live as our own master and somehow avoid the Good Lord and His message to us. Most of the time it is not a conscious effort—it is a gradual decline, a gentle erosion. Then we wake up at some critical moment in our life’s journey only to realize that we have filled our lives—our grain bins—so full, yet we are somehow **so** empty.

My friends, today let us hear this message clearly and be reminded, as the Pope is, of days gone by—that SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI, so passes the glory of the world. Let us refocus our lives and, if need be, realign our hearts not to build larger grain bins but to replace them with an everlasting assurance, and join our voices with the psalmist himself and make his words our own:

“Protect me O God, I trust in You for safety; You are my Lord, and all good things I have come from YOU.”

God Love You.