

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily  
Sunday, August 3, 2025  
18<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Cycle C

Have you ever tried chasing the wind?

That is what Qoheleth – this wise, old, successful man –from the Book of Ecclesiastes – in today’s first reading, says many of us are doing. He had it all: wealth, power, fame, accomplishments, knowledge. But after experiencing all that life could offer, he looks us in the eye and says: “Vanity of vanities! All things are vanity!” In other words: it is all a mist. A puff of smoke. Here now, gone in a breath. What a sobering reminder.

Qoheleth is not being negative; he is being real. He is teaching us the hard truth: Nothing in this world can ultimately satisfy us. Not our money, not our status, not even the admiration of others. At the core of our being is a hunger that no amount of wealth, success, or pleasure can truly satisfy. Why? Because we were not made merely for this world and for worldly things. We were made for God. Our hearts are restless not because we lack things, but because we long for Someone greater. All the treasures we chase in this life are passing. But when we begin to desire God above all else, we find a freedom this world cannot offer. The moment we realize that nothing earthly can fill the eternal space in our soul, we start living with true purpose and peace. Only in God does the heart find its rest.

In today's gospel passage, Jesus reinforces this with a parable. A rich man had a great harvest. So, he built bigger barns. Nothing evil in that, right? But here is the problem: He thought his possessions guaranteed his future. He believed that if his barns were full, his soul would be full too. Then God speaks: "You fool... this night your life will be demanded of you." And everything he had stored up? Left behind. Just like that. Jesus ends today's gospel parable with a clear warning: "Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God."

There is a book titled *The Denial of Death*, by Ernest Becker. He says that much of our modern life is built on pretending we will not die. That is why we obsess over wealth, success, power, fame, fitness, physical appearance. We think if we have enough of these, we will somehow escape death or delay it. But we cannot do so... And that is not a message of despair. It is a message of liberation. Let me put it this way: When you truly accept, deep down, that your life on earth has an end, something inside you shifts. You begin to live differently. You loosen your grip on things that will not last – possessions, applause, titles, or image. You stop letting social media define your value, or chasing after goals and thrills that leave your soul empty. Death, paradoxically, becomes a doorway to freedom. Because when you remember that your time is limited, you start focusing on what is eternal. You become more intentional, more grateful, more grounded in God.

St. Paul points the way in today's second reading: "Seek what is above."

In other words, aim higher... not just in ambition, but in love, in mercy, in holiness. Let heaven shape the way you live on earth. Because in the end, what matters most is not what we leave behind, but what we bring with us into the heart of God.

In other words, root your life in God. Live with heaven in your heart. Not because you hate the world, but because you have learned: The goal of life is not to build barns. It is to build character. It is not to store up things... it is to store up love. It is not to be admired... it is to be faithful.

Let us build bigger hearts... for God, and for others.