

## **Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time “C” Cycle July 30-31, 2016**

**John D. Rockefeller was one of the wealthiest Americans of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He founded *Standard Oil Company* in 1862 and went on to become the nation’s first billionaire. He was blessed with a long life, dying at the age of 98 in 1937. Contrary to popular opinion, Rockefeller was a very generous man, setting up one of the earliest foundations to fund many charitable and educational works.**

**After Rockefeller’s death, a reporter asked his financial secretary how much did he leave. The secretary replied “all of it.” Death, as we know, is the great equalizer of all, great and small. As Job, in the Old Testament, said: “naked we come into the world, and naked we leave it.”**

**This is the sobering message of the first reading, from the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes, tells us “all things are vanity (or empty).” Striving for a right relationship with God is really the most important thing to strive for in this earthly life.**

**Saint Paul, in the second reading from his letter to the Colossians, urges us to seek what is above and to put to death whatever leads to destruction: immorality, impurity, evil desire, and especially greed, all sins.**

**In the Gospel reading, from Saint Luke, Jesus teaches by way of a parable. The rich farmer in the parable put his whole being into acquiring wealth, thinking that he could without restraint “eat, drink, and be merry.” He gave no thought to his sudden death when he would be stripped of all.**

**Instead Jesus teaches us to seek what matters to God: obeying his commandments, giving him proper worship, to be good, kind, and generous to others. In short, we are to live the summary of God’s will for us: to love him and to love our neighbor.**

**Much of our modern American culture promotes materialism, consumerism, self-indulgence, and greed, which a recent movie touted as good. We all legitimately need money and possessions, even luxuries. As people of faith, as committed Catholics, however, these should not possess us. A good remedy against greed is to be generous.**

**Sometimes we are tempted to think that we will live forever and have plenty of time to forge a relationship with God. We know, however, neither the day nor the hour when we will be summoned from this life. May we always seek the things that are above and enjoy a taste of heaven, God’s love, here on earth.**