

Spiritually Speaking

Vanity of vanities ...

When possessions become obsessions

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph

This week we reflect on man's longing for material realities. When we are preoccupied with material possessions, we forget the more important things in life. Through the scripture readings, Jesus is trying to impart that the main concern of our lives on earth should be to "make ourselves rich in the sight of God."

The reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23 begins with these verses: "vanity of vanities says Qoheleth [the narrator], vanity of vanities! All things are vanity!" Man runs after material things instead of the Creator for consolation and support. The writer points out that the things that are supposed to satisfy human beings do not. Look at all the effort a person puts into acquiring wealth. To what purpose? To leave it to his heir. He does not carry all that he acquires along with him.

The Gospel from St. Luke (12: 13-21) offers an incident that occurred in Galilee as Jesus was teaching to a large crowd. A young man called out from the crowd, "Rabbi, tell my brother to divide the inheritance of our father." Jewish law clearly prescribed that at the death of a father, the elder son received 2/3 of the inheritance and the young son received 1/3. This is obviously a younger son who is complaining about the inherent wrongness of it all. Nothing will divide families, brothers and sisters more than dividing up an estate. We may think it happened two thousand years ago, but so it was then, and so it is now. I know stories of many of our brothers and sisters getting into family issues over property divisions. I can even reflect on my own family story, after the sudden death of our dad. Jesus refused to get involved in a petty family dispute.

Jesus was concerned, however, with the preoccupation with worldly things. He said, "Beware of greed, for life does not consist of things possessed." The sum total of a person's life is more than his or her financial portfolio. He illustrated this point by telling a story: There was once a man who had an unbroken run of prosperity. In today's language, the story of the owner of a multinational company like Apple, Google, Facebook, etc. So prosperous did he become that his barns could not hold all of his crops. His solution was to tear down these barns and build bigger and better barns. Then, he could sit back and truly enjoy life. His philosophy was eat, drink and be merry. Why did Jesus call him "rich fool?"

The question is, what did this man do wrong? To answer, we must understand that this is not a parable about money, but about values and what is important. I suggest four things that this man did that made him a fool: He had full barns, but an empty heart and never thought of sharing with anyone in need. He overestimated his own value in the scheme of things. He forgot what his real business in life was really all about. He forgot about the nature of time.

Possessions are necessary. But possessions can assume such importance that they become obsessions. When one is so concerned about the things that one could have but does not have, so much so that one can no longer hear the urgent call of God, then one has indeed gotten one's priorities wrong. Such is the man in today's Gospel. Jesus is not against him having more wealth, nor is He against justice being done between him and his brother. Jesus is disappointed that after listening to all His preaching, the man's first concern still remains his share of the inheritance.

Jesus, fearing there could be more people in the crowd like this man, turns and says to them: "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions" (Luke 12:15). Greed? What greed? I am sure many of my readers are involved in harvesting time. I heard from many who say they are blessed with a good crop of wheat this year. When we enjoy a good crop, unlike the foolish rich fool, we need to open our ears and eyes to reach out to the needy and the poor, think of the struggling children around the world struggling to get food at least once a day. We can avoid being like the "rich fool."



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

Obituaries

Carolyn Kay Kight

Carolyn Kay Kight, 66, was born May 16, 1956, and passed away July 11, 2022.

Those who will live on in her memory include her children, Beverly Haugen and Michael Haugen; her siblings, Debbie Haugen and John Haugen; grandchildren, Nia Ruckman, Tyra Haugen, Bryton Rayburn, Jacob Haugen, Ryan Haugen and Mason Haugen



Carolyn Kay Kight

"You use a glass mirror to see your face; you use works of art to see your soul." George Bernard Shaw.

And what a beautiful soul it was. The colorful stroke of every brush. The dedication of all the ornate jewelry. The fragrant notes that arose from aromatic soaps. The warmth that intricately designed blankets enveloped.

Her soul laid the foundation of home. Open arms ready to embrace those she held dear; her family, her friends, and arguably most importantly, her dogs. She welcomed the world into her home; hosting gather-

ings to bring together her community.

Nothing brought more joy into her life than socializing with those around her, taking road trips with her girls or sitting in her art room. Her soul would illuminate all it came in contact with. With her husband, Phil, they would rest themselves atop the water, dangling lines below, waiting to see what rises from the depth.

Though her soul is now at peace, welcomed by her husband, Phil; her mother, Mary; her father, Don; her sister, Linda; her brother Donnie, there are no words that can express how much she will be missed. Indeed, there is only one that comes close: Saudade. Saudade is a Portuguese word that roughly translates to a deep emotional state of longing for someone loved, with the knowledge that they may never be seen again.

Carol Kight was loved deeply and though those who live on may not see her in this life again, the lasting effervescence of her soul will never dwindle.

Jeffrey Wayne Hams

Jeffrey Wayne Hams, 58, of Ione, died Thursday, July 21, 2022, at St. Charles Medical Center in Bend, OR, surrounded by his brothers. A celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m., Saturday, July 30, 2022, at the Ione Community Church.

He was born August 10, 1963, at Pendleton, OR to Wayne and Dianna Pettyjohn Hams. Jeff was raised and attended school in Ione where he graduated from high school. He had the honor of playing in the state championship football game in 1978.

On August 6, 1988, he married Michele Sailing; the couple later divorced. He had two sons, Tyler Hassing and Christopher Jones.

Jeff loved fishing, hunting mushrooms and just being in the outdoors.

He was preceded in death by his sister, Leslie Kay and both grandparents.

Survivors include his parents; brothers, Craig Hams and Shawn Hams; sister, Deena (Paddy) Hansen; nephews, Paul (Ka-

tie) Hams, Matt Hams and Chatham Hansen; nieces, Hailey (Adam) Chitlick, Carley (Brandon) Snyder and Katie (Ryan) Heath and his loyal pets, Carma and Tuxie, as well as many good friends.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Ione Booster Club, PO Box 4, Ione, OR 97843.

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in care of arrangements. The online condolence book is available at www.sweeneymortuary.com.

~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Untrue statements made about Neighborhood Center

To the editor and the citizens of Morrow County; I would like to address comments made by Ann Spicer at the recent recall meeting held at Two Old Hags pizza. During the meeting she made statements alleging a number of not-for-profit organizations, including the Neighborhood Center of South Morrow County (The Neighborhood Center), did not feel supported by the county.

The statements made are not factual statements and in no way represent the feelings and beliefs of the

board, employees and volunteers affiliated with the Neighborhood Center. The Neighborhood Center has, and does feel very supported by Morrow County, both monetarily and in spirit.

Ann Spicer is not affiliated with the Neighborhood Center, has not volunteered at the Neighborhood Center, is not a member of the board and does not have any right to speak for or on behalf of the Neighborhood Center. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Nina Bisson
Board Chair

Bag sale scheduled

The Neighborhood Center is having a Bag Sale on Wednesday, August 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at 441 N Main Street, Heppner. The first bag purchased will be \$15 and the second bag at the discounted price of \$5.

Shop for the entire

family and fill up a bag with clothing, shoes, books, games, music and movies. All other household merchandise is 50 percent off this day only.

Proceeds from the sale help fund the food pantry and other emergency assistance programs.

Ione Community Church
Ione, Oregon



Now! 10:00 am through Labor Day

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24

An Open Letter to the Public

Due to the ongoing confusion about the current situation, we are sharing this statement with media and concerned Morrow County residents.

Morrow County Health District is the designated ambulance service provider for all of Morrow County and has been providing these services for over 27 years.

Morrow County Health District has requested that the EMS Advisory Committee enforce the Morrow County Ambulance Service Area Plan with respect to how Boardman Fire Rescue District is dispatched. Currently, BFRD is engaging in a practice known as call jumping, where multiple providers respond to a single incident. In Oregon, call jumping is illegal. The state of Oregon has determined that this practice presents risks to the public and patients that do not outweigh the benefits of that action. These concerns were cited in the Determination order prepared by the EMS Advisory Committee and MCHD in March 2022. Actions taken by MCHD and the EMS Advisory Committee are undertaken for the sole purpose of ensuring emergency resources are efficiently and appropriately regulated in an effort to ensure community safety.

MCHD has made no requests involving Boardman Police Department. Boardman Police Department has never been a party to the ongoing dispatch issues.

MCHD has made many attempts to resolve this issue and develop a partnership with BFRD to enhance EMS services. Those attempts have not been successful. At this point, due to the continued public safety risk, MCHD is following the legal process outlined in the ASA Plan as we constructively work toward a reasonable, community-based resolution.

Boardman Fire Rescue District is very good at what they do, and we are beyond grateful for their firefighting services. MCHD's EMS first responders are also very skilled at what they do and have been saving lives in our communities for 27 years. Changing the way emergency medical services are deployed in Morrow County does not make sense. Not when there is already a system in place that is safe, effective, efficient and proven to save lives

MCHD appreciates community feedback and inquiries. Questions and comments can be sent to community@mocohd.org. More information about MCHD's EMS services is available at <https://www.morrowcountyhealthdistrict.org/emergency-medical-services>.



WEEKLY SHOPPER

July 29th, 2022

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