

Mini Lesson #9 – Everything passes but God

Mini Lesson inspired by the words of Father Josh Johnson

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ru8A5I06UTo&list=PLioVCI6Yze4n_xzxopx8JUfIR8hIbVZO-

Even before all the changes we've had in our lives lately, these words from Father Josh have never been more true. I sometimes find myself getting drawn into the brief satisfaction that material possessions bring. Do not get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with working hard and having nice things, just as long as those THINGS are not what your life's focus is about. So, what do I mean by that?

Ask yourself a few of these questions:

What do you think is making you happy right now?
What do you think is making you content right now?
What is something you continuously look forward to?

Maybe compare these answers to how you would answer these questions a few months ago. Throughout your day, what actually brings a smile to your face? Is it how many people have viewed your stories on Instagram and Snap chat? Is it seeing what you ordered online arrive at your door? Do you smile when your new shoes you ordered arrive? Is it shopping at the mall? Do you smile playing your new favorite video game? Again...all of this isn't bad, unless it's something that you allow to consume you or if it maintains a super high priority in your life.

Like Father Josh said, all of these things will fade, even the coolest and most awesome of songs will eventually become outdated. Think of 3 of your favorite things right now, 3 material possessions that are your favorite. Could be a video game, a pair of shoes, new sports equipment, new phone. Now I want you to think back about 5 years, what were your top 3 favorite things then?

Ask yourself these few questions (be honest with yourself with these, have family members help you remember your most prized possessions):

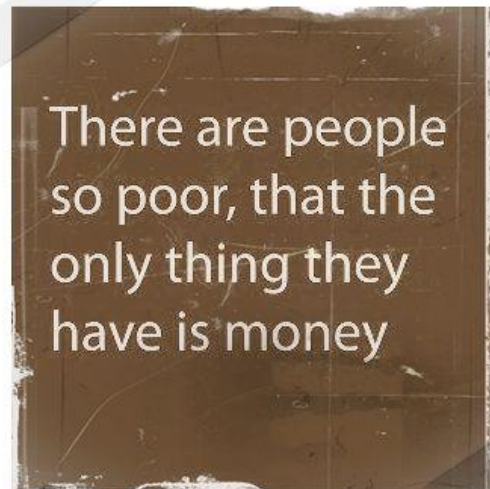
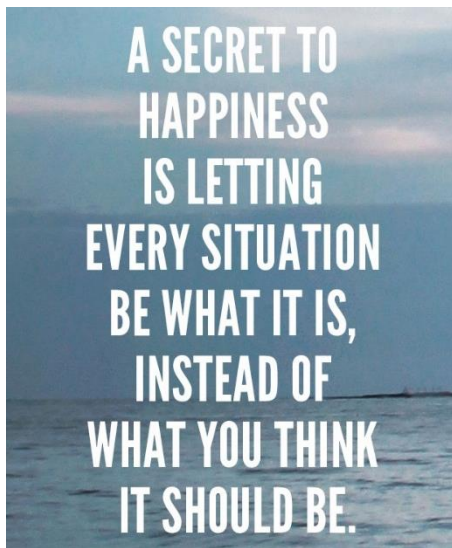
Do those top 3 items from 5 years ago still hold the same meaning to you?
Do you even have any of those items today?
Do you feel silly for even thinking those items were important to you at the time?
Think of the 3 important items you own right now. Do you think they will be your top 3 in a year?

Remember, having things/possessions is not a bad thing but realize, certain "fads" fade, friends come and go, possessions become old and lame. Think of the movie the Grinch (the one with Jim Carrey) All of Whoville's Christmas gifts "things" ended up in the grinch's garbage. Each year the people of Whoville were looking for the "next best thing". At least the movie did have a happy ending and everyone was able to focus on what matters the most.

As we continue through this time of quarantine, it's so easy to get caught up in material things to make us happy. It's a challenge because we are unable to go out as much as we want and spend time with friends and physically be able to focus on things other than the walls of our house and the screens in front of our face.

Through all this, remember, "This too shall pass." Also remember the most important thing, that there is one thing, one person in your life that will never get old, never become lame, never be outdated, you'll never regret spending time with, can always be a priority over anything without fear of guilt. God isn't going anywhere; we just have to spend some time with him to realize just how important and timeless He is.

Here's a little food for thought and something to make you smile today



A laugh for those who miss shopping ☺ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzEL4h1vq7o>

Saint of the Day: Saint Catherine of Siena

Saint of the Day for April 29

Saint Catherine of Siena's Story

The value Catherine makes central in her short life and which sounds clearly and consistently through her experience is complete surrender to Christ. What is most impressive about her is that she learns to view her surrender to her Lord as a goal to be reached through time.

She was the 23rd child of Jacopo and Lapa Benincasa and grew up as an intelligent, cheerful, and intensely religious person. Catherine disappointed her mother by cutting off her hair as a protest against being overly encouraged to improve her appearance in order to attract a husband. Her father ordered her to be left in peace, and she was given a room of her own for prayer and meditation.

She entered the Dominican Third Order at 18 and spent the next three years in seclusion, prayer, and austerity. Gradually, a group of followers gathered around her—men and women, priests and religious. An active public apostolate grew out of her contemplative life. Her letters, mostly for spiritual instruction and encouragement of her followers, began to take more and more note of public affairs. Opposition and slander resulted from her mixing fearlessly with the world and speaking with the candor and authority of one completely committed to Christ. She was cleared of all charges at the Dominican General Chapter of 1374.

Her public influence reached great heights because of her evident holiness, her membership in the Dominican Third Order, and the deep impression she made on the pope. She worked tirelessly for the crusade against the Turks and for peace between Florence and the pope.

In 1378, the Great Schism began, splitting the allegiance of Christendom between two, then three, popes and putting even saints on opposing sides. Catherine spent the last two years of her life in Rome, in prayer and pleading on behalf of the cause of Pope Urban VI and the unity of the Church. She offered herself as a victim for the Church in its agony. She died surrounded by her “children” and was canonized in 1461.

Catherine ranks high among the mystics and spiritual writers of the Church. In 1939, she and Francis of Assisi were declared co-patrons of Italy. Pope Paul VI named her and Teresa of Avila doctors of the Church in 1970. Her spiritual testament is found in *The Dialogue*.

Reflection

Though she lived her life in a faith experience and spirituality far different from that of our own time, Catherine of Siena stands as a companion with us on the Christian journey in her undivided effort to invite the Lord to take flesh in her own life. Events which might make us wince or chuckle or even yawn fill her biographies: a mystical experience at six, childhood betrothal to Christ, stories of harsh asceticism, her frequent ecstatic visions. Still, Catherine lived in an age which did not know the rapid change of 21st-century mobile America. The value of her life for us today lies in her recognition of holiness as a goal to be sought over the course of a lifetime.

Saint Catherine of Siena is the Patron Saint of:

Europe

Fire Prevention

Italy