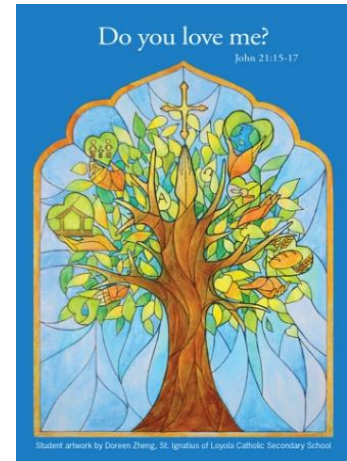


As our faith teaches, we are called to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in heaven. (Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church-prologue) The New Year is a time to know, love and serve Christ!

There is a lot of hype surrounding New Year's resolutions during the month of January. Many people use the beginning of the new calendar year as a reason to reinvent themselves by searching for ways to improve themselves and their lifestyles. People want to save more money, quit smoking, exercise more, lose weight and the list goes on. Instead, as baptized Catholics, we could focus our New Year's resolution on things that help improve our spiritual life and this resolution can be easily fulfilled if we understand how and why we should rekindle our love for God.



In the Old Testament Moses told the people that God sets before people life and death and he says chose life so you may live. (Deut. 30:15-20) In the New Testament, Jesus the new Moses, gives us a similar ultimatum in saying that we cannot serve both God and money because things of God lead to life and things of wealth pass away. (Mt 6:24) So it is important as disciples of the Lord to focus on treasure that lasts through this life into eternal life.

Today's society encourages us to be wise investors with mutual funds and investments as there will come a time in our life where we need to tap into those. We know that the time of our employment will come to an end and we need to rely on our RIF and the income from other investments. Similarly, this was what Jesus was doing. In the parable of the unjust steward, (Lk 16:1-13) the steward knew that his days were limited and so he was making an investment; he was endearing himself to those who were indebted to his Master, thereby ensuring that he would have some income that he would be taking care of. The point of the parable is that we need to apply the same concern that we have for our financial future to our spiritual future. We have to realize that we need to feed and nourish our soul, in addition to being concerned about our investments and building up our wealth. This is a very simple point in the Gospel and we can do this by leading a life of prayer and service because what last is eternal life.

We need to always remember that our soul is eternal while everything else passes away. Friends come and go, families change over time, we move into other homes, we have wealth and prosperity and then we don't. But what lasts is our souls so we invest in the things of God to build up our life now so that our life in heaven will be assured.

May the New Year be an inspiration for us to focus our lives on the things of God and to recognize what is truly lasting and what will bring us through this life to the joy of eternal life.

By Kandy Harkin, School Chaplaincy Leader, St. Ignatius of Loyola CSS