

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John
Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ,
August 30, 2020**

ETERNAL RETIREMENT

Many people simply no longer believe there is anything waiting for them when life ends. There is no “eternal retirement” for which to prepare. That being the case, why bother to follow the Gospel, to live as a faithful Catholic, or to attend Mass. Why bother to “invest” in a future that will never come?

Yet throughout the Gospels, Jesus proclaims there is a future that follows death. What happens in that future depends on what we have done to prepare for it.

Jesus makes that point once again in this Sunday’s Gospel. He tells us that “the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father’s glory, and then he will repay all according to his conduct.”

The conduct that leads to a place of joy in the kingdom of heaven consists in living according to the example given to us by Jesus. As he tells us, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save

his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

In our Second Reading, Paul warns us not to be misled by a society that teaches us to live only for the moment. He tells us, “Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.”

Jesus obviously lived that way. That is why he could embrace suffering and the cross. When Peter was shocked by this behavior, Jesus told him, “You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.”

This Sunday, we are reminded that people of faith believe in a future beyond death. People of faith prepare for a “retirement” that lasts forever in the kingdom of heaven.

Let us not forget to pray for each other,

Father John Carlos