

Dear Members of Sacred Heart Parish,

When I was growing up, every Friday was “house-cleaning” day, (I can still smell the floor wax and furniture polish, the cleanser and the bleach.) Weather permitting, Saturday’s were set aside for working out in the yard, mowing, raking, and turning over the garden. Whenever we would complain, my father would respond: “You should be proud to be doing this work. This is your home. This is your yard.” When I went into the Seminary, Saturday’s were spent cleaning up the outside and inside – dormitory, refectory, classrooms, lockers, hallways, floors, stairwells, the many grounds, etc. Whenever I would hear one of my classmates complain about the work, which was nothing new to me, I would remember my fathers’ words: “You should be proud. This is your home.”

In today’s Gospel, Jesus enters His Fathers’ House which had been sadly changed into a market place, a real mess. The Scripture is quoted: “Zeal for your house will consume me.” With great zeal, He goes about cleaning it up until it becomes once more the House of His Father. How often do we go to our hearts to do some cleaning, every day, once a week, or is it time for our annual Spring/Lenten clean-up? As we enter the Third Week of Lent, do we find ourselves complaining about the work, the sacrifices, the extra prayer time, the additional almsgiving? Are we committed, with great zeal, to making our heart holy enough to be a dwelling place for God, a Temple of the Holy Spirit? If we are humble and zealous enough to do the work, the cleansing, the sanctifying, then the Lord will honor the work we have done by entering our heart to proclaim: “This is my home.”

“We hold a treasure, not made of gold, in earthen vessels, wealth untold;
One treasure only: the Lord, the Christ, in earthen vessels.
Light has shone in our darkness: God has shone in our heart
With the light of the glory of Jesus, the Lord.”

May zeal for the presence of God consume us,
Father John