

Each of the seasons has its own beauty and we all have our favorite. Few would deny that summer is probably number one for most of us. It is a time to relax from our busy schedules and enjoy the warmth of the summer sun. For many spring is special because it symbolizes new beginnings and a time of renewal. Winter, in spite of the snow, the icy roads and the cold weather, is a favorite of many who enjoy skiing, skating and the wondrous beauty that occurs when the sun shines on the icy trees.

For me, the autumn is a very special time. October is my favorite month for, if we are fortunate, as we have been this year, the days are still warm enough to enjoy sitting out on the deck or taking a walk through the woods and enjoy the magnificent splendor of the changing of the color of the trees. Everyone seems to be settling in to their normal routine- the students are back in class, vacations are finished and activities that break during the summer months are in full swing. It is a time to be quiet before the frantic Christmas holidays are upon us. And it is a time to be more aware of our blessings as we celebrate Thanksgiving.

Those of us who lived through such disasters as the fires in British Columbia or Hurricane Juan here in the Maritimes are especially grateful this year. Both ends of this beautiful country of us now have a much better understanding of how little control we have in our lives. Yet, in spite of the disasters, we have much to be thankful for. The most important is the generosity and love that we experienced as family, friends, neighbors and, yes, strangers, went out of their way to help one another. Those who had shared with those who had not. This October has some special events occurring as well for we must not forget our beloved Mother Teresa's beatification. For all, but especially Vincentians, she is the visible proof of unconditional love as she worked so tirelessly among the poor.

Because of this, Thanksgiving was especially meaningful to me this year and I would like to share with you part of the homily that I heard at our Thanksgiving liturgy. Father told us a story about a group of students who were asked to list what they thought were the seven wonders of the world. After much discussion as to what each student had written, the group decide that the most important were as follows:

1. The Pyramids
2. The Great Wall of China
3. The Empire State Building
4. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon
5. The Eiffel Tower
6. The Statue of Liberty
7. The Leaning Tower of Pisa

One little girl was silent throughout the entire discussion. The teacher asked if she had finished her list. She replied that she had but was having great difficulty deciding which was the most important as there were so many. The teacher suggested that she read her list to the class and they could perhaps help her decide which was the most important. This is what she read:

The Seven Wonders of the World are

1. To Hear
2. To See
3. To Taste
4. To Touch
5. To Feel
6. To Laugh
7. To Love

Most of us would agree that the first list is an impressive one- a list of man- made objects that are well-known and admired by many. The second list, however, helps us to realize that is the simple pleasures that are the most profound. The gifts in the second list are priceless gifts given to us by God and we can only be grateful and say thank you to Him for those gifts. Not all of us are called to be Mother Teresa but all are called to love and to live of that love in service to God by serving one another. In the coming months let us all try to us all of wonders that God has given us to carry out His work.