

**Joe Rooney was a man of the past, the present and the future. He helped people prepare for the future by selling them insurance. He took care of present needs by working his farm. And he could look back on the past, no matter how difficult it was, and say, "We were luckier than most."**

**Joe was a man of integrity. He believed in God. He worked hard. He loved his wife Mary, and he raised a great family. He did all of it as the same person – always looking out for others and keeping a positive attitude about life.**

**It was a joy to see him and Mary together. Even in their last years, when they just looked like two old sick people, it didn't take long to figure out they were unquestionably young at heart and healthy in their love, their faith, and their good humor. We are grieving their loss because we got to receive the benefits of their lives. We were luckier than most.**

**We can hear the words of Jesus speaking directly to us today, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." He spoke these words to his disciples at the Last Supper. "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places." But he speaks this same message here in this room today. These words sound as though they came from the Joe Rooney school of philosophy: Don't worry. You have insurance. You may own only a few things, but you can make a lot out of them. Concentrate on what you have and enjoy it, not on what you don't have and regret it.**

**There will be times when that message is hard to absorb. There is a time to be born, but also a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant. There is a time to weep, but also a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance. Those famous lines come from the book of Ecclesiastes, and you have to think whoever wrote this was a farmer. No one understands the good and the bad of life better. Farming teaches you how to roll with the punches. For that reason, we can imagine Joe speaking the words of St. Paul: "I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance.**

**The Rooney family has suffered a double loss in the year 2007 – both Mary and Joe have left. They did everything as a couple: They spent 60 years in marriage. They raised nine children. They worked together, they laughed together, they played together, and they danced together. Now they stand together before the Lord, the just judge, who will rescue them from every evil threat and bring them safe to his heavenly kingdom.**

**My brothers and sisters, Jesus has shown us the way to the Father. Let us embrace it, the bad with the good, the work with the play, and live in a way that would make Joe proud, a way that will follow his steps on the way to eternal life.**