

Funeral Homily for our “Mom,” “Ruth”

Last week on Friday the fifth week of Easter, the day our Mom died, the Gospel passage that was proclaimed was this very passage. Jesus instructs us, **“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God, have faith also in me. In My Father’s House there are many dwelling places.”** Jesus went on to say, **“I am going to prepare a place for you.”** And, **“I will come back again and take you to myself.”** This was all part of Jesus **preparing** and **instructing** His disciples for His impending passion and crucifixion. Jesus demonstrates that He is the way. Thomas lacking in faith says, **“Master we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?”** Thomas in reality was asking the exact same question that all of us would ask. Jesus reassures Thomas and us that this world does not have the final word. Jesus has the final Word as He says,

“I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Jesus was emphasizing to the disciples and us, the indispensable necessity of faith.

This passage from St. John is very significant in expressing our faith in Jesus Christ, and that He desires to lead Mom and us to the Father.

In the Confessions of Saint Augustine he shared a tender story of faith in Jesus Christ when he writes about the final conversation of his mother St. Monica, to him and his brother. St. Monica was seriously ill with a fever, and **prepared** her sons with her **instruction** to, **“bury my body wherever you will; let not care of it cause you any concern. One thing only I ask you, that you remember me at the altar of the Lord wherever you may be.”** Then St. Monica fell silent.

Last Thursday night when it became obvious that Mom was not going to recover from pneumonia, she received the anointing

of the sick, the prayers of the dying, and the Apostolic Pardon from Fr. McCarthy, Fr Taylor, and me. Three priests praying for her eternal salvation. Mom had been incoherent most of Thursday. During the late evening she mustered enough strength to motion for Raymond and I to come close. We stood over her holding hands. Mom was **preparing** us for her final **instructions**. She told us, “**Take care of each other, stick together, take care of Rick’s kids, and grandkids....I’m done.**”.....

Mom uttered her final **instructions**. This was the last time she spoke. She fell silent..... Friday around 12:40 pm Mom experienced the grace of a happy death through the intercession of St. Joseph, and departed this life; while her friend Julie was in the room, along with Sister Greta. Today we remember Mom at the Altar of the Lord, as we offer this sacrifice of the Mass for the repose of her soul.

Our hope is that she has now completed her journey to the dwelling place that the Lord Jesus Christ has prepared for her. We know the way to the Father is through Jesus Christ, there is no other way. Mom knew this as she had a re-birth of faith back in the mid 1990's. We find hope in eternal life for Mom in the words of Revelation, **“Let them find rest from their labors for their works accompany them.”** Mom experienced many joys, attending Mercy High School, marriage to her husband Dick, the birth of three sons, Rick, Ray, and me. The birth of three grandchildren, Sarah, Ricky and Becca, the birth of three great grandchildren, Searra, Erica, and Alaina, and another expected October 1st. Mom found joy preparing many meals; and time with family at the place on the lake. Mom also experienced many sorrows: especially the death of her husband Dick after 40 years of marriage, worst of all was the death of her first born son Rick, nearly three years ago.

This left a deep deep wound in Mom's heart that we cannot comprehend. Add to this all of her health issues.

Even in the midst of these sorrows, Mom still found joy while sharing in the cross of Christ.

St. Paul reminds us today that we are made for more than this world when he says, **“We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.”** As people of faith we look not to this world which is temporary, but we look to what we do not see, “the heavenly kingdom,” which is eternal. It is our faith in eternal life that gives us the hope that we will see Mom again, in a place where there is no more pain, no more tears, no more sorrows, only eternal glory. And, we believe in the resurrection when Mom and us receive a glorified body at the return of Jesus Christ in all His glory.

Our hope for Mom is that she now gazes upon the Father in heaven with the Blessed Virgin Mary St. Joseph, and all the Angels and Saints, and sees her husband Dick and her son Rick again, and hears these words of Jesus, **“Well done good and faithful servant come and share your Master’s joy!”**