

Life is Difficult

All Souls' Day (Remembrance Mass)

November 2, 2020

Fr. Tony Davis

'Life is difficult.' (15) That is how M. Scott Peck began his book, *The Road Less Traveled*. I think all of us would agree. Even if and when we have good seasons in our lives where things are going well and everything is falling into place, we can feel the presence of difficulty still hanging over us, knowing that it can strike at any time.

This has been a difficult year and difficulty has struck us. Many bad things have come at us at once, including the covid-19 pandemic. This came as a surprise to us and put a hold on just about everything in our personal and/or work calendars. I was in a St. Matthias School Teacher and Staff meeting when the governor announced that school would be closed for 3 weeks. We all thought that was like an eternity! As it turned out, that was just the beginning. We did not return to school that school year and even now we still have many restrictions in place.

During this time of pandemic, some of you had losses in your families, whether due to the virus or not. Whether it was losing an adult son or a spouse of many decades, life has been and still is difficult. You had to make a decision whether to delay funeral services, how you were going to comply with the mandate limiting the number of guests allowed in funeral homes, and questioned whether it was a good idea to receive a warm and comforting hug from someone you love. For many, there has been little to no closure. 2020 has been filled with death and we are still not out of these difficult times. We hope and pray that 2021

will bring better news, but we should prepare ourselves for only a gradual return to life and our normal activities.

On this All Souls' Day, we are reminded that life is limited. While that sounds like a curse and has been a curse, it can also be a motivation. It can motivate us to keep fighting, to keep moving, and to keep faith in God. The battle isn't forever. These difficulties are only for a time; the joy of heaven is for an eternity. In heaven, that cloud of difficulty always hovering over us will disappear forever!

To all those gathered here this evening due to a recent loss, thank you for being here. We acknowledge your pain, anger, sadness, and emptiness. We acknowledge your fears and loneliness. As we look upon these pictures before us, we pray for your loved one and for you. We also are mindful of the loss of Sr. Marie Shields this past year, who was dear to many of us.

Life on earth is difficult, but it is bearable. As Dr. Peck says right after stating 'life is difficult,' "once we truly know that life is difficult- once we truly understand and accept it- then life is no longer difficult. Because once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters." (15)