

## November 3, 2021 -- Goodbyes and November of Saints and Souls

### Health update:

About a week ago, my excellent oncologist, Dr. Shaum at the Angeles Clinic of Cedars Sinai encouraged me to begin saying my goodbyes to family and friends while I could still carry on a coherent conversation. This weekend you will have a chance to meet my sister, Maureen, my brother-in-law, Bill Baggott, my mom Sheila, my cousin Tracy Reed. Some of my closest friends are next week.

The second clinical trial which I began in September proved very difficult and was concluded with a weeklong hospitalization revealing internal bleeding in the duodenum and then a few days after, two blood clots in each leg. The cancer has spread to the lungs and I have three PE's (pulmonary embolisms). Lots of pain in the stomach and back. It is possible things may turn as I begin this new clinical trial with the Angeles Clinic, but that will be a long road ahead given my current condition.

### Spiritual Reflection – Anima Christi:

November – the month of remembering the saints and those souls in our life who have shaped us is one of my favorite months. I will not be able to greet all my friends or family over the next few weeks. You will have to accept my prayers at this time. As much as meals sound the great meeting place at the heavenly banquet, I am no longer eating. I do continue to have many blessings in sleeping dreams and unexplained events that are great consolations. For example one day I looked across the street while I was praying in the rectory sitting room, and one of our Reed Park neighbors transformed his cart with all his belongings into a big white bird. It was pretty amazing. Then with a movement of the hand, one blanket recovered the entire image as a cart with stuff. The Holy Spirit is continuing to surprise!!

My life is filled with gratitude. My life as a priest, both diocesan and as a Jesuit – 29 years. What an honor it is to serve Christ in the making of the Kingdom..... even through the darker places of sickness. I am grateful for my brother priests, bishops and the lay women and men who continue to shape me. I have been blessed to see the Church and the world in so many expressions..... and what I have seen gives me great hope because of Christ. We are the unfolding icon of His success being painted in the universe. I have especially been able to experience that here at St. Monica's under the leadership and great love of my brother, Lloyd, and my other brothers of Prosper, David and Vince.

My final words are those I left with the community last week. It is the opening meditation in the Exercises of Ignatius – the Anima Christi. Let it soak into the soul and remake us into Christ's imago mundi (image of the world).

#### Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.  
Body of Christ, save me.  
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.  
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.  
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.  
O Good Jesus, hear me.  
Within your wounds hide me.  
Permit me not to be separated from you.  
From the wicked foe, defend me.  
At the hour of my death, call me  
and bid me come to you  
That with your saints I may praise you  
Forever and ever. Amen.