

## Funeral homily for Jim Ring

Years ago, an advertisement for an insurance company depicted two oversized hands joined together with palms open and the voice of one saying, "You are in good hands with All-State". It conveyed the message that in a time of loss and sorrow, one can still find shelter, protection and security. Hope is not extinguished. It turned out to be an effective marketing strategy. The slogan has been repeated for over half a century.

In Saint Luke's account of Christ's death, Jesus died praying. On his lips were words taken from the Book of Psalms from the Old Testament:

"Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my Spirit"

It is a prayer of confident trust. In the last moments of his life Jesus appealed to His heavenly Father and counted on the shelter of his presence.

Chris, (Jim's wife) at the end of his life, he placed himself in your hands, the very hands that were joined with his on the day of your wedding. You supported him. He leaned on you. In you he found shelter, protection and security. You prepared him for death. You handed him over to the One who is the author of Life.

Saint Teresa of Avila is remembered for her profound words on living the faith. Consider her words:

"Christ has no hands but yours; no hands, no feet on earth but yours.

Yours are the eyes with which he looks with compassion on this world.

Yours are the hands with which he blesses this world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet.

Yours are his eyes, you are his body.

As an illustration, let me share with you a story of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, recently declared a saint of the Church.

One day Mother Teresa was walking down the streets of London and she saw a man who was quite drunk.

He appeared to be sad and miserable.

She went right up to him, took his hand, shook it, and asked, "How are you?"

He said, "After so long, I feel the warmth of a human hand"

And his face lit up!

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the inspired writer of the Old Testament Book of Wisdom writes, "The souls of the just are in the hands of God".

After a lengthy period of illness it is my fervent hope that Jim, a wonderful father, loving husband, one time coach, friend of many in our neighborhood, is now, together with Jesus Christ, in the warm embrace of our heavenly Father.