

Reflections at graveside service for Margaret Picarillo'

Do you have a "wish list"?

If we are honest with ourselves the answer is a resounding "yes". We each hope to have our desires fulfilled and our goals realized.

In the days of our youth, we may have wished for popularity, fame, wealth, good grades in school, success and the latest in consumer goods.

Later in life, our wish list may have changed. We wanted to love and be loved, the sweet consolation of comfort and security, happiness, eternal life (Life beyond the grave) and peace of soul. At the end of the day, we wanted nothing less than to enter into God's presence.

In his popular book, "Tuesdays at Morrie's", national sports writer Mitch Albom recalls a visit to one of his former professors at Brandeis University who, at the time, was gravely ill with Lou Gehrig's disease. In the course of their conversation the ailing professor expressed a sense of hope with his visitor by speaking the words, "If God spares me". Albom was stunned. "But professor", he protested. "I thought you were an agnostic. As far as I know, you were never a man of religious faith". "That's true", the professor admitted.. But now I am not so sure".

As our life draw to its inevitable conclusion we are more likely to explore the ultimate question of what happens after death. Grace triumphs over doubt.

When the hour of Our Lord's Passion and Death arrived, he showed little emotion and remarkable serenity. In the final days of his life, he did not answer back his accusers: Pilate, Herod and Caiphas. Christ spoke openly about his impending death, and was fully prepared when his passion commenced. He implored his disciples to not let their hearts be troubled. He set a wonderful example.

Someday, our hour will come. If we are wise, we will not resist. We will utter no words of complaint or display a fit of anger. Like our Master, Jesus, we must, by the grace of God, preserve our peace of mind in the face of suffering and death. In God alone is our soul at rest!

If Margaret died a beautiful death, it may be because the members of her family gave her all the emotional support she needed. Her family prepared her for the hour of her death.

For us Christians, death means life is changed, not ended.

May our dear Margaret enjoy rest in the peace of Christ.

Amen.