

Good evening, dear Parishioners,

On Tuesday I told you a little about Dad. Today I am thinking about my sister, Linda.

Dad and my sister were always especially close. Linda was Dad's co-pilot from the start. As much as I miss Dad, my sister misses him more. She retired a couple of years ago and so the topic of my retirement comes up from time to time. Now, I don't get to retire until June of 2027. Still, we talk about it anyway: about my benefits, my medical insurance, but mostly about where I'll live after thirty five years of living in parish rectories.

How ironic it seems now as I recall how often we've concluded these conversations about my retirement by saying, "Well, you never know, anything could happen between now and then: we could get a new bishop, I could get transferred, there may be new policies and a nice pastor may invite me to reside in his rectory. You never know."

Yes, anything could happen. You never know. But I never thought for a moment that a worldwide pandemic would happen.

Now I believe it's good to plan ahead and always have, but you can only plan so much. It's been said that *if you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.*

John Lennon wrote the song *Beautiful Boy* for his five year old son and included it on *Double Fantasy*, a record he planned to be his "comeback album." Some lyrics from the song come back to me now: *Life is what happens while you're busy making other plans.*

We Catholics believe in Divine Providence. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, this means that God created the universe *in a state of journeying* toward an ultimate perfection yet to be attained, to which God has destined it.

It's God's world and God is in control. God is in control of everything, great and small.

In her last year on earth St. Therese of Lisieux came to a greater understanding of God's Divine Providence than she'd ever had before. In the final months of her life she wrote: *More than ever I understand that the smallest events of our life are conducted by God....*

I believe the same. I know that Jesus Christ, the Lord of History, is in control. Of that I have no doubt. That means that He's in control of the COVID-19, a virus that can do no more harm than He permits it to, to you to me, to any of us.

Tomorrow I hope to share more insights with you from the saints who've gone before us; their knowledge of the Divine Providence is greater than ours. Until then, may God grant us all a restful night. Please try not to be anxious; I'm not, and please, please know and rest assured that I am praying for you every day when I offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for your intentions. I keep you always in my heart and in my mind

With kindest regards, I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ Jesus,

Father DeMartino