

Jubilee Homily

Patricia Siemen, OP

June 22, 2019

It is with such joy that we celebrate your Jubilee of 25, 50, and 60 years!! We hold our Silver Jubilarian, Rowena Cruz, and our two Golden Jubilarians, Estrellita David and Arsenio Puno, in our hearts as they celebrate in San Fernando, Philippines. We will rejoice with them when they join us for *Embracing the Future* the end of July.

Jubilee is such a splendid time of giving thanks – and remembering our first response to our call as Dominican Sisters of Adrian. This response has led each of you to giving 25, 50 and 60 years to God in living your call to Dominican life within our precious Adrian Dominican Community. Each of you here have blessed – and been blessed by so many people and places with your individual and communal “yes” these past sixty years. You have poured out your love among seminarians, helping to form their spiritual lives; among inmates and chaplains serving in federal prisons; among those in parishes and schools. You have poured out your love and presence among those who are sick, materially poor, and in need of education,; among those hungry for God’s word and presence where you encountered them.

And God has poured out God’s love and presence upon you; whether you knew it or not!

There are no better words than those of St. Paul’s in the first reading today to acknowledge God’s – and our - gratitude for your wide and vast fidelity to walk this journey of faith for 60, 50 and 25 years. As St Paul says, and I paraphrase:

We give thanks to God every time we think of you: Frances, Joan, Betty, Jeanette, Joyce, Anastasia, Mary Lou and Barbara Mary.

We rejoice at the way you have continually promoted the Gospel from the very first day of profession: Sean, Beverly, Mary Jean, Delores, Teresa, Mary Ann Dorothy and Jo Ann.

We know that God who began this good work in you will carry it through to completion: Jean, Joan, Christa, Joan Christine, Mary Kay, Emilie, Peter Anthony and Sarah.

May your love more and more abound in understanding and experience of God:

Mary Emidio, Susan, Joan Marie, Helen, Jane and Rosemary.

May you be found rich in the harvest of justice: Lita, Arsenia and Rowena.

John's Gospel today promises that whatever we ask in God's name, God will do for us. Now the "answer" may not always be in the way we think and want it to be! But by now we have enough lived experience to know in our hearts that God never leaves us orphaned or alone...no matter how deep the loss or disappointment may be.

For you diamond Jubilarians, God carried you through your early years as an Adrian Dominican, through the challenging and freeing years of the Second Vatican Council and Renewal, through the years of finding your unique ministerial calling within the Mission of Jesus in the midst of wars, civil, racial, gender – and ecclesial - turmoil and unrest. God provided you anchors, friends and community through those years. And now God is with you as you experience slowing down and learning a new form of ministry: one of presence to Creation and the People of God. Our God has never abandoned you over the years but always shows up in the guise of so many surprises - if we but have the eyes and heart to see.

One of the greatest accompaniments of the Holy One in our lives is in the form of dear friends. Friendship, especially for those of us who do not have married or life partners, is a grand gift of God. John O'Donaghue writes of this gift in "Ana Caram: gifts of friends of the soul. These are those beloved friends who love us and carry us through the good times, sad times, and vulnerable times. These friends are God's special blessing and a manifestation of the Beloved's holy accompaniment throughout the daily rhythms of our lives. These dear ones are a primary way that God remains with us; they are a reminder that we are never left orphaned.

So as you celebrate today – and this entire Jubilee season - with loved family members, dear friends and your Adrian Dominican Sisters and Associates, we remember and celebrate not only you but all those who have companioned and befriended you along your journey of living faithfully your desire to be one with God and others. Whether living or dead, these dear friends are still with us.

So as we celebrate today, I urge you and all Adrian Dominican Sisters to remain close to God so we can continue to carry out God's work. The words from our Adrian Dominican Constitution remind us of the heritage we bear in carrying forth the mission of Jesus, to bring reconciliation, justice, peace, mercy, and love at all times, to all peoples, and to Earth herself. To do this intentionally requires that we are in an alignment and in an intimate relationship with the Beloved so that God's grace can flow through us.

Today we give special thanks for the precious, generous, loving gifts of your hearts and lives, and for the mutual gift of all those who have supported, sustained and loved you on your journey into this moment of Jubilee. In the words of St. Paul, "It is our wish that you may be found rich in the harvest of justice" – and that you know that God who began this good work in you will carry it through to its fullness."