

Column112220

Companions on the Journey

November 22, 2020

Dear Friends,

Not yet. Such a small, little phrase. Not yet. But we live our lives with those two words never very far away from us. Not yet. I have had people say to me: "I can't forgive her for what she did." "No. No, you can't. Not yet." "I just haven't been able to find the right person as spouse." "No. No, you haven't. Not yet." "I don't know what's the matter with me, Father, I just don't seem to be able to make much headway in my prayer." "No, No, you haven't. Not yet."

"I have a 25-year old who is floundering about what to do in life. He just doesn't seem to have found his niche." "No. No he hasn't. Not yet." "With this corona-virus lasting so long, there is so much uncertainty. I don't seem able to put my foot down on firm ground. I can't seem to make a decision." "No. No, you can't. Not yet."

With so many of us experiencing the "not yet" dimension of life it would be easy to conclude that we have little hope but that would be wrong. We are and we remain a people of hope. We may not be there yet but that doesn't mean that we aren't going to get there. God's grace is what supplies us with hope. While not experiencing all that we would like to see or experience, we do not allow ourselves to become so discouraged as to become hopeless. We know that people change. Hearts are converted. Those with addictions turn them over to God and begin to live again. Those who were lost suddenly find something that works for them and off they go. The light goes on. Things click. We even find ourselves realizing that we can let go of things that we thought we could not live without.

And as we realize this simple truth we find that there is this little seed growing in our hearts. It is the seed of gratitude. This gratitude has many reasons but one of the best is when we realize that God has never given up on us despite our failings, our selfishness, our inconsideration, our stubbornness, our sin. God's love abides in us now and forever. God never gives up on us, no matter what. We may give up on ourselves but God does not give up on us. And that is good because without the grace of our God we truly would have no hope and no reason to hope. But because God's grace is real we have reason to be thankful. Yes. We have reason to be thankful even though all those things I mentioned at the top of the column have not happened yet.

Thursday is Thanksgiving Day. It is about as late as it can be. We know we are thankful and we like to think of ourselves as being particularly thankful. This year, though, let's not just talk about being thankful. Let's really pray. Come to the 9 o'clock Mass on Thanksgiving Day. Or tune in as we livestream the Mass. Our celebration is over before 10 o'clock. And what better way is there than praying the Eucharist on a day devoted to gratitude. I hope you Will be there. Happy Thanksgiving!

Peace,

Msgr. McHenry