

Column090422

## **Companions on the Journey**

**September 4, 2022**

**Dear Friends,**

Being in the situation I am in, with retirement approaching. I have heard my share of atrocity stories about what happens to people after they retire knowing what to do. Trying to navigate the schedule full routine and the now schedule empty routine. Where will I live (I do not know but the Lord said it would be provided and so I am just being patient and praying for the grace to recognize what He is doing when He is doing it)?

Working, or in my case, ministering, has been the backbone of the last fifty years of my life. Knowing that there will be things to do every day, and that there will be requests for my presence or participation or wisdom or counsel. I did learn, back in the winter of 2019 before the corona virus hit, while I was on my three-month sabbatical in Mexicali, Mexico that I had no difficulty organizing my day and filling it with things that I was interested in doing and enjoyed doing. I relaxed into a much slower pace of living without fully realizing it. I only came to know this when I returned right in the middle of Lent in 2019. I enjoyed the slower pace and the time for some leisure activity. Enjoyed having time. When I returned to the pace of life here in the Northeastern quadrant of the United States (Between Boston and DC, the whole corridor) The speed of living here is unusual and not found everywhere in the world.

We come at life at a very fast pace. Personally, I believe we pay a dear price for doing so. I do not think everyone who lives here is able to navigate the speed. Especially many of our children. They pay a price because there is a very real pressure on them to do many things and to make countless decisions even before they know their own minds. That is not good for them. We treat them as if they are seasoned adults many times and this does them no favor, in my opinion. If the pace and speed of our culture takes a toll on me as a full-grown adult with experience and maturity, what does it do for the little ones?

I raise all of this because we are celebrating the Labor Day weekend and we recognize our work and its importance, significance, and necessity. We give ourselves to our work. We earn a living. We make our contribution to the world around us. Our work provides a necessary outlet for our skills, knowledge, and expertise. Balancing the demands that our workplaces upon us with our responsibilities that our relationships and families place upon us is not easy. Often there is a stress that develops in the effort to cope. Right there is where we need Our Lord to help us. Right there we can pray. In the moment. "Lord, please help me to do the right thing. Help me to entrust my job and its work into your hands At the same time help me to place my spouse and my children and all my relationships into your hand. Turning them over to you. Trusting that you will help and even that you will handle the gnarly and difficult situations that sometimes arise. Lord, I know that I cannot handle all of these things on my own. I ask you to be with me and to help me realize that I am with you—always."

My friends, work is with us always. Prayer is with us always too. They are meant to go together. But unless we think, we will not remember and we will not pray, especially right when we need it, in the moment. So let us resolve to ask for the little prompts that arise from within us in the moment when we need them. And to heed them. We can at least try.

Peace,

Msgr. McHenry