

**Companions on the Journey**

October 30, 2022

Dear Friends in Christ,

This week we begin November, the month of All Saints, All Souls and Thanksgiving Day. It is a reflective time of the year. Nature enters into her hibernation cycle. We see the leaves forsake their life on the limbs and be swept to a sure death only to be replaced in the springtime by other family members. We remember family and loved ones who have died and we honor their memory and we reflect upon our own lives.

Recently I came across a passage from a book by Matthew Kelly called *Resisting Happiness*. He references a luncheon meeting he had with a number of people who work in Hospice with dying patients. He asked them: What do such people talk about? The nurses said that often the people spoke about how they wished they had lived their lives differently. These are some of the things they spoke of:

I wish

- 1) I had the courage to just be myself
- 2) I had spent more time with those I love
- 3) I had made spirituality more a priority
- 4) I hadn't spent so much time working
- 5) I had discovered my purpose earlier
- 6) I had learned to express my feelings more
- 7) I hadn't worried so much about things that never happened
- 8) I wish I had taken more risks
- 9) I had cared less about what other people thought
- 10) I had realized earlier that happiness is a choice
- 11) I had loved more
- 12) I had taken better care of myself
- 13) I had been a better spouse
- 14) I had paid less attention to other's expectations of me
- 15) I had quit my job and found what I really enjoyed doing
- 16) I had stayed in touch with old friends
- 17) I had spoken my mind more
- 18) I hadn't spent so much time chasing the wrong things
- 19) I had had more children
- 20) I had touched more lives
- 21) I had thought about life's big questions earlier
- 22) I had traveled more
- 23) I had lived more in the moment
- 24) I had pursued more of my dreams.

These are the reflections of dying people who now see more clearly and have come to acknowledge some of the things they regret. But we do not have to wait for our deaths to draw near to begin to change some of the things that we believe would make us better persons. We can give ourselves permission now and embark on a new path and embrace ourselves more truly. That is always what Jesus offers. It is what He means when He says that He is the Way and the Truth and the Life. Why not begin—today?

In the Peace of Christ,  
Msgr. McHenry