

## Rose Marie Tarantola

It is hard for me to believe that within the space of two years, we have lost Agnes Marie Tarantola, Joseph Tarantola, and now Rose Marie Tarantola. Any single one of these deaths has been cause for tremendous grief, but to suffer all of them in a short space of time compounds the sorrow of this family and the people who have loved these good friends of our community. Rose Marie had many friends and performed charitable activities, but one characteristic describes her best: She loved her husband Joe. She ministered to him unfailingly in his surprising and final illness. She stayed at his side while he was alive, and she missed him every day that he was gone. It had to be a difficult way to live, but through it all Rose Marie kept her faith alive.

Job comes to mind. According to the bible's account, Job was a good man, a hard worker, and a member of a wonderful family. God found him faithful in everything. Satan worked a bargain with God to test how faithful Job would be. God confidently agreed. Job then lost everything - his possessions, his family and even his own health. It's hard to imagine anyone who suffered as many losses as Job did. Satan obviously struck this bargain because Satan knew human beings well. Many of us, when things go wrong, we abandon our trust in God. We lose our faith. We say there can't be a God if awful things are happening to me or to people I love. Satan knew just how people think, and he thought Job would fall into the same trap.

But he did not. Job did not deny God. Instead, he offered one of the greatest testimonies of faith that we have in the bible. We hear it today as the first reading for this mass, a cry not of pain but of confidence that somehow all this sorrow, all this loss, would end in triumph because of God. Job says, "As for me, I know that my Vindicator lives, and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust; Whom I myself shall see: my own eyes, not another's shall behold him; And from my flesh I shall see God." This kind of confidence pleases God whenever we face our times of greatest sorrow.

We do not know how God will restore justice to the earth, but we believe that God will. Justice is of God's nature. Redemption is God's plan. Jesus himself promised, "the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

My brothers and sisters, we gather here today in sorrow, but also with confidence and hope. We gather in order to listen for the voice of the Son of God because we believe in his plans for us. Grateful for Rose Marie's life, we entrust her now to God's loving arms, and we pray that she may be reunited with Joe in a bliss far surpassing what they experienced on earth. In the midst of their struggles, they still knew the beauty of human love. In the midst of our struggles, we pray that they may know the beauty of God's love. May they rest in peace together with their ancestors. And may God give each of us the confidence we need that Christ one day will bring us home.

Monday, February 27, 2017