

Josephine Manichia

On behalf of all of us at St. Anthony's I'd like to express my condolences to Josephine's family. This parish meant a lot to her, and it is an honor to welcome her home here, where we are praying that she will enter her final home in heaven. She meant a lot to her family, and you members of her family and friends have taken exceptionally beautiful care of her. You set an outstanding example of Christian love and charity by caring for her throughout her life, but especially when she needed it most. That was probably easier on you because of the love she gave you. The loss you feel right now must be immense.

Josephine never married and she could not walk very well, but in spite of these challenges, she experienced great friendships, and she walked the difficult road of life without ever complaining. In fact, she brought a ray of sunshine to all those who came to know her.

At the end of Luke's gospel, on the evening of the resurrection, Jesus appeared - unrecognized by two disciples who walked with him on the road to Emmaus. They had walked many journeys with him in the past, and now, on what was for them a strange day after the death of their master, they did not even recognize him in their company. But they did what disciples do: they walked, even though they could not do it very well, so heavy were their hearts. Still, by doing what disciples do to the best of their abilities, they discovered Christ among them. He was with them all the time.

St. Paul writes to the Corinthians that we walk by faith, not by sight. The first disciples could see Jesus in person; they walked by sight. But we who come after them do not have the same vision. We walk by faith. Paul says we live in fragile bodies that are like tents you can knock down and fold up. We have to resign ourselves that our bodies, which are capable of so many things even when we are infirm, are not built for ever. We live inside them like apartment dwellers. But God has made for us an eternal home in heaven, and that is where we are designed to live for eternity - our bodies made new again.

As we bid farewell to Josephine, we recall the gift of faith we have received and the journeys we all must take. In faith we pray that on the great day of resurrection she will discover Christ at her side. May each of us continue sharing the gifts of charity that Josephine inspired, that we may experience Christ at the end of our days, not just by faith, but also by sight.