

On behalf of all of us at St. Anthony's, I'd like to extend condolences to Frances' family and friends, especially her children and grandchildren, and her great-grandchildren, and her great-great-grandchildren. You have lost a dear lady who was very important to you, and even though she lived to be 83, you lost her sooner than you wanted.

Today's society has created many fine opportunities for women to make a career. This has provided countless benefits for businesses, cities and neighborhoods. Frances surely possessed the skills necessary to work outside the home and contribute to society in a different way. But she didn't. Her priority was her family. She was a faithful wife to a loving husband. She raised eight children in a simple home in the east bottoms. Those children in turn have increased the family and stabilized the local community in many ways, all because of her focus and her love.

She experienced the sorrows no one wants to face - the death of a child and the death of a spouse. But she carried on because other people needed her; she even helped them experience loss because of what she had endured. Both she and Roberto died in the house that meant so much to them, a place that they called home. In her final days, Frances experienced from her children, especially Joe and Penny, the kind of care that she had demonstrated inside the same four walls.

St. Paul says our body is like a house. It's a place you inhabit, and it serves you very well. But like any house it needs fixing up from time to time, and in the end it cannot last forever. He writes, "we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven." The house we inhabit is home for a while, but then God prepares another one.

Jesus used the same metaphor at the Last Supper as he prepared to leave his disciples behind. He says, "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be."

Roberto did home repair for the López family, but now it is Christ who does home repair for Frances. He alone can replace her tent, her earthly dwelling, with an eternal home in his Father's house, where there are many dwelling places.

The death of Frances López fills hearts with gratitude for her life, as well as some penetrating questions: How am I taking care of the dwelling place I have received? Am I keeping my earthly home in good repair? What kind of eternal home is Christ preparing for me? How do I prepare to move there? With guides such as Frances, we can find the way, Jesus Christ, who is also truth and life.