

Marguerite accepted whatever life handed her. Of course, life handed her many blessings. She married the man of her dreams, JC. She raised two superb daughters and enjoyed her grandchildren. Her friends and family loved her company. She was a good reader, and was very open-minded, but in a quiet way. It wasn't that she pushed you to think like her; she pushed herself to understand others. The result was a loving and lovely woman who made a great companion.

Marguerite was a faithful Catholic; she was not just someone loyal to what Catholics believe, but someone who acts on what Catholics believe. She prayed with people at nursing homes, she served at the food pantry, she would volunteered at parish events, and she brought a smile to the faces of those who saw her. She did not draw attention to herself, but a parish like this just doesn't operate well without the likes of Marguerite Rooney. We all need to figure out now how to do it alone.

Marguerite leaves us at a time of year when our church remembers the leaving of Jesus, the period between his Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The disciples had spent years with Jesus. Now he had died, but he rose from the dead and appeared to his followers. That strengthened their faith in his promises. But at the Ascension, they lost the Lord they loved. Between that time and the coming of the Holy Spirit, they were saddened, confused, and prayerful. They probably looked around the room and wondered, "How are we going to do it alone?"

They did, though. They did it because the Spirit of Jesus filled their hearts, and they lived as though he were living in them. This first reading is only one example. Peter confidently taught a group about Jesus. He says, "Jesus Christ commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead."

Some people tremble at the thought of being judged by Jesus. But Jesus taught us how to live, and it isn't out of reach. You are blessed, he says, if you are poor in spirit. The kingdom of heaven is yours. You are blessed if you mourn. You will be comforted. You are blessed if you are merciful. You will be shown mercy. You are blessed if you are a peacemaker. You will be called a child of God. These beatitudes are not hard. Marguerite lived them all. She did it because she accepted whatever life gave her. She could see through the struggles and setbacks of life as through a veil; she had confidence that there was more to it than sadness.

Marguerite had no idea she was close to death. She spent the month of May enjoying graduations with her family and shopping for new shoes. But she was always ready. St. Paul says, "If God is for us, who can be against us? What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us." We can easily accept the things life hands us if we appreciate the love of Christ. That is the secret to a good life.