

Diminishment: A Reflection for November

As I write I regret that I am tied down indoors with such beauty outdoors. Golden, crimson, multi-colored leaves provide an uplifting vision glistening on the rain-washed parking lot. Fall is truly an exciting time in Michigan and this year we are being treated to an exceptionally breathtaking display of color, far beyond our expectations. Just yesterday a drive across town on I-696 provided a color tour to delight me on this usually bland stretch of highway.



Such a marvelous display of beauty is there for us. This brought to mind an insight provided to me years ago by the poem, *The Falling Leaves* by Joyce Rupp. These leaves she notes are caught up in the "Autumn death dance." However there is not a sense of sorrow or sadness but rather joy.

As with the leaves, our diminishment is not for our destruction. It is part of the cycle making way for new life.

As we age we become more aware of our diminishment; challenges regarding our sight, hearing, memory and mobility, to name a few. We are called to let go, to be at peace with our limitations. Indeed we are called to be grateful for these invitations to let go, to loosen our grasp on set ways no longer workable for us. It is all part of the journey.

Let us learn from God's marvelous handiwork surrounding us and move into each day with a deep peace and an ever increasing awareness of God's presence pressing in on us.

Let us learn too, from those who have lived out this grace of letting go, perhaps a parent, friend or family member. They knew when to "turn in the car key," when to let go of treasured ministries, when to make their needs known and welcome assistance in so many ways.

From the Word of God:

"Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall become has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3:2.

As we celebrate All Saints and All Souls day let us take time to be aware of our loved ones who are a step ahead of us in the Journey of Life.

Opening Prayer on the Feast of All Saints

God our Father, source of all holiness,
the work of your hands is manifest in your saints,
The beauty of your truth is reflected in their faith.

May we who aspire to have part in their joy
be filled with the Spirit that blessed their lives,
so that having shared their faith on earth
we may also know their peace in your kingdom.
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May I Have This Dance, 1992,
by Joyce Rupp,
Ave Maria Press

By Evelyn Booms, IHM