Dear Parish Family,

We all know that life has its ups and downs. Life brings us joy, laughter, merriment and good times. We greatly appreciate these moments in our lives. We can even say that we are greatly blessed by God for these times. There are also the unwelcome times that come in our lives. And they do happen whether we like or not. We wish they don't but they do. We just want the happy times to be our constant companions of life.

Last week I was in St. Patrick Church in Urbana, Illinois to officiate the wedding celebration of my niece. It was indeed a joyful moment not only because of the privilege given to me, but most especially it was an opportunity to see many relatives and friends scattered all over the country whom I have not seen in a good number of years.

However, in the midst of that happy occasion I received a call from the Philippines about my brother having a cardiac arrest and was in the emergency room of the hospital. I watched briefly at the video as my brother was being revived by the medical personnel but of no success. My younger brother Edwin passed away. I was not over grieving the passing of my sister in law a few months ago, the passing of a brother priest and mentor last month, and now my own brother. My family and my brother's family are in great sorrow and sadness. We were devastated! It happened so fast. There was no time to say goodbye. No time to say I love you! I talked with him briefly a few days ago not knowing it was our last conversation. As I share this with you, I still feel the heaviness in my heart of these unwanted and undesirable situations of life. Many human thoughts come to mind, not only questions why, or the unfairness of it but also why now? At the same time the priest in me is saying that these people I have lost recently are in a much better place than ours and they are in God's hands now.

Please pray for me and my family!

Sincerely,

Fr. Dwight