THE CHURCH OF SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

DOMINICAN FRIARS OF THE PROVINCE OF SAINT JOSEPH

November 16, 2014 • Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time



The Parable of the Talents
Willem de Poorter

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday Masses
Saturday: 5:15 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM, 12:00 Noon, 5:15 PM

Daily Masses
Monday-Friday: 7:00 AM, 12:00 Noon, 5:15 PM
Saturday: 12:00 Noon

CONFESSION TIMES

Monday - Saturday
11:30 - 11:55 AM
4:40 - 5:05 PM

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Sunday: 11:00 PM - 12:00 PM
Wednesday: 12:30 PM - 5:00 PM
Thursday: 5:45 PM - 8:00 PM
First Friday: 5:15 PM - 10:30 PM

DEVOTIONS

Rosary
Weekdays at 11:40 AM
Sunday at 3:00 PM

Liturgy of the Hours
Weekdays following the 5:15 PM Mass

Compline and Benediction
Thursdays at 7:45 PM

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Prayer Group
Wednesdays following the 5:15 PM Mass

Our Lady Queen of Peace Prayer Group
Saturdays at 9:00 AM

Legion of Mary Prayer Group
Thursdays at 7:00 PM

411 EAST 68TH STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10065
Parish Phone • 212-988-8300
Parish Email • info@stcatherinenyc.org
Parish Website • www.stcatherinenyc.org
Office Hours • Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

From Father Jordan, O.P.

PASTOR, THE CHURCH OF SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

My Dear Ones,

May the Grace of Our Lord be always with us!

The particular Sunday celebrations of All Souls' Day and the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica have been celebrated, and all the news we have at this time concerning *Making All Things New* has been shared, and we can return to our regular weekly conversations. Blessed be God!

The *Status Animarum*

Each year, pastors submit to the Archdiocese of New York a report called the *Status Animarum*, quite literally "the Condition of Souls." This report supplies the archdiocese with a long series of statistics about how many people attend Mass on a Sunday, and how many baptisms, first Communions, confirmations, weddings, and funerals are celebrated each year in a particular parish.

By God's mercy and His grace, our report continues to show signs of new life and growth. This growth is especially seen in the increasing number of baptisms – forty-six and counting – and the constantly increasing number of students enrolled in Religious Education. Our Religious Education program, *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS),* and youth ministry program, *Ignite*, have grown from 3 students when we began to 50 students enrolled this year. God is so good to us! We can never thank Him enough.

While we only report ten marriages that have taken place in our church, Father Jonah and I have prepared at least three times that number of couples who will be married elsewhere. Each Pre-Cana session requires at least 5 or 6 meetings of approximately 60– 90 minutes per couple. This is a great investment of time, but both Father Jonah and I believe it is an investment of time well spent! Very profound faith formation takes place in these meetings, as well as the developing of an understanding of marriage as a vocation, and an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses each person brings to the marriage. It's important work! We also require couples to complete a course about Natural Family Planning (NFP). NFP is a wonderful way for couples to plan the timing and number of the children they will have, and also a wonderful grace by which the couple becomes closer as each spouse carries the responsibility to naturally plan for their family.

Knowing Jesus

But at the heart of this growth and service is the constant question: do the parents of those baptized and those in *CGS* and *Ignite*, the young couples married here and prepared for marriage elsewhere, the members of the RCIA, the nearly 100 Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist – do they really ***know Jesus***? Through these experiences of grace, is Jesus becoming ever more completely the source, center, and end of everything that takes place in their families? Do they realize that they have been ***called, consecrated, and chosen*** by Jesus Christ for Himself, for His Kingdom, and for Heaven?

This is the question that is ever before me: ***how well do you and I know Jesus***? If *Making All Things New* is going to be in any way successful, these are the essential questions: ***do we know Jesus*** and ***do we serve Him everyday in every possible way***?

Christmas Fair

I hope you are all planning to spend some time this coming Saturday and Sunday, November 22nd and 23rd, at St. Catherine's Third Annual Christmas Fair. The Christmas Fair this year promises to be really extraordinary. I am very grateful to Kim Quatela and Fran Warga for being the Co-Chairs of this year's Christmas Fair. They stepped in on a moment's notice, and they have organized and energized a very generous group of parishioners (and one or two non-parishioners :-)) who have served on the Christmas Fair Planning Committee. Thanks to so many of you, as well, as there is wonderful merchandise to be sold at this year's fair.

At this time, the Christmas Fair is the only parish-wide fundraising event. Last year's profits doubled those from the year before; I hope that this year we can double what we made last year, and perhaps make a little more! Our needs are many and you are always so generous.

Christ the King, Thanksgiving and Advent

Next weekend is the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, the last Sunday of the liturgical year. Another year of grace has passed! The Thursday following Christ the King is Thanksgiving, and the Sunday following Thanksgiving is the First Sunday of Advent – the beginning of a new year of grace.

These three celebrations remind us of very important realities, realities that are especially poignant at this time in the history of our society, our church, our parish, and our archdiocese.

Pope Pius XI established the Solemnity of Christ the King in 1925. It is a newer feast in the Catholic Church. The pontiff was *witness to a turbulent time in the world's history*. *Secularism was on the rise and dangerous dictatorships were emerging* in Europe and beyond. Christ had long been referred to as King, but ***Pope Pius and the Christian faithful saw the respect and reverence for Christ's authority waning in the midst of the unrest during the first part of the 20th century***. In response, the feast was established with the intent to reaffirm and refocus faith and respect in the kingship of Jesus. Does anything sound familiar? Pope Pius wrote:

> "When once men recognize, both in private and in public life, that Christ is King, society will at last receive the great blessings of real liberty, well-ordered discipline, peace and harmony" (*Quas Primas,* #17, 1925).

Christ is King through no triumphant military conquest; Christ is King not by the way He requires our subjugation to Him, but rather how He invites us to accept His love. Christ is King because of His ultimate service for our salvation, in loving obedience to the Father as He embraced the wood of the Cross. Our King reigns from no throne, but from the wood of the Cross!

Our forefathers set out for this great land, that they might establish a country based upon the Christian principles of religious liberty, well-ordered discipline, peace and harmony. Through the struggles of the first year,both physically and philosophically, they gathered to thank the One who had brought them to this "great new enterprise," the One who had protected them thus far, and the One whose protection they sought in the approaching winter. They also gathered with those they once considered enemies. Without knowing it, they gathered to thank Christ as King who had replaced the tyranny of the earthly king, George III. They revered all the gifts they had as flowing from God's supreme authority. On this Thanksgiving Day, let us gather in joyful praise for all that God has lavished upon us since last Thanksgiving Day: our families, friends on earth and friends above, and for God Himself – the greatest of all gifts.

The Solemnity of Christ the King and Thanksgiving point us to the ultimate reality of our lives: ***Heaven is our home!*** Advent begins by reminding us that one day "we are goin' to see the King!", that our celebrations of hearth, home and altar prefigure the Eternal Banquet at which we long to be seated, and that the Christ of history, whose presence we now know in mystery, will return in majesty.

It seems that it all leads back to that question that is ever before me: ***how well do you and I know Jesus?*** By His Mercy may our answer be: completely, fully, and joyfully!

You are with me at the altar, my dear ones! Please, pray for me!!

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee!

In the Lord,

Fr. Jordan, O.P.

PARISH INFORMATION

REGISTRATION

Welcome! To become a parishioner of the Church of Saint Catherine of Siena, call the parish office at 212-988-8300 ext. 184 or visit http://stcatherinenyc.org/about/join

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Participation in a baptism preparation class is mandatory for infant baptism. Classes are held every third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The next class will be Tuesday, October 21. Please call the parish office at 212-988-8300, ext. 184, to register for this free class or for more information.

CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Refer to the cover of the bulletin for the schedule, or call to request an appointment.

SACRAMENTS OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND FIRST RECONCILIATION

Youth participate in the sacramental preparation program coordinated by the Director of Catechesis. Typically, youth receive these sacraments during their second grade year. Contact 212-988-8300, ext. 186, for more information.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Youth participate in the sacramental preparation program coordinated by the Director of Catechesis and they are confirmed in their 8th grade year. Contact 212-988-8300, ext. 186, for more information.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Arrangements are to be made by calling the parish office at least six months in advance. It is necessary to book your wedding date with the parish office prior to booking a reception hall. Weddings are held on Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 1:30 pm or 3 pm. Contact the pastor at 212-988-8300, ext. 284, for more information.

SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please notify the Parish Office if you or someone you know will be hospitalized or confined at home and would like to be anointed by a priest.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS

If you or someone you know is interested in the priesthood, please contact Fr. Jordan, O.P., at 212-988-8300, ext. 284, or Fr. Jonah, O.P., at 212-988-8300, ext. 182.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

An inquiry class is offered on Monday nights for those interested in learning more about the faith, whether baptized or non-baptized, as well as those adults who desire to receive the Sacraments of Eucharist or Confirmation. Please call the parish office at 212-988-8300, ext. 182, for more information.

THIS WEEK AT SAINT CATHERINE'S

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17: ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

7:00 AM Mass, *Church*
9:00 AM Redeemer Women, *St. Dominic Hall*
12:00 PM Mass, *Church*
12:30 PM Eastside Bridge Club, *St. Dominic Hall*
3:30 PM Ignite Youth Ministy, *St. Joseph Hall*
5:15 PM Mass, *Church*
7:30 PM RCIA, *St. Dominic Hall*

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18: WEEKDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

7:00 AM Mass, *Church*
10:00 AM Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, *St. Joseph Hall*
12:00 PM Mass, *Church*
12:30 PM Eastside Bridge Club, *St. Dominic Hall*
3:30 AM Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, *St. Joseph Hall*
5:15 PM Mass, *Church*
7:00 PM Baptismal Preparation Class, *St. Joseph Hall*
7:30 PM Christmas Fair Meeting, *St. Dominic Hall*

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19: WEEKDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

7:00 AM Mass, *Church*
9:00 AM Redeemer Play & Learn, *St. Dominic Hall*
12:00 PM Mass, followed by Adoration, *Church*
12:30 PM Eastside Bridge Club, *St. Dominic Hall*
3:30 PM Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, *St. Joseph Hall*
5:15 PM Mass, *Church*
7:00 PM Investment Committee Meeting, *St. Joseph Hall*
7:00 PM Schola Rehearsal, *St. Dominic Hall / Church*

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20: WEEKDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

7:00 AM Mass, *Church*
12:00 PM Mass, *Church*
12:30 PM Eastside Bridge Club, *St. Dominic Hall*
3:30 PM Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, *St. Joseph Hall*
5:15 PM Mass, followed by Adoration, *Church*
6:00 PM Legion of Mary, *St. Joseph Hall*
7:00 PM *A Journey to the Heart of Faith*, followed by Compline and Benediction, *Church*

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21: THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

7:00 AM Mass, *Church*
8:30 AM Christmas Fair Set-up, *St. Dominic Hall*
12:00 PM Mass, *Church*
3:30 PM Ignite Youth Ministy, *St. Joseph Hall*
5:15 PM Mass, *Church*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22: ST. CECILIA

9:00 AM Our Lady, Queen of Peace Prayer Group, *Church*
10:00 AM 3rd Annual Christmas Fair, *St. Dominic Hall*
12:00 PM Mass, *Church*
5:15 PM Vigil Mass, *Church*
6:30 PM AA, *St. Dominic Hall*

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23: OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

9:00 AM Mass, *Church*
10:00 AM 3rd Annual Christmas Fair, *St. Dominic Hall*
11:00 AM Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, *Church*
12:00 PM Mass, *Church*
5:15 PM Mass, *Church*

NOVEMBER DEVOTION ~ *Remembering the Holy Souls*

During the month of November, the Church directs our attention to recall and pray for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. The Book of Remembrance is available near the Holy Souls Shrine (on the left side of the Church) to record the names of your deceased loved ones. A short prayer that can be offered for their purification is, "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls rest in peace."

LEGION OF MARY PILGRIM VIRGIN

As part of the ministry of the Legion of Mary, parishioners are offered the grace of the Pilgrim Virgin, a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary shared among parishioners for prayer and meditation in their homes. If you would like the Pilgrim Virgin in your home for a week, please contact Fran Creegan (212-879-0273) or Chris Vincequerra (646-497-1049).

WEEKLY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION



Come spend time with the Source of Life and grow as a disciple of the Lord! Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament this week takes place on:

Wednesday 12:30 - 5:00 pm
Thursday 12:30 - 8:00 pm
Sunday 11:00 - 11:45 am

"United with the angels and saints of the heavenly Church, let us adore the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Prostrate, we adore this great mystery that contains God's new and definitive covenant with humankind in Christ."

~ Pope Saint John Paul II

PARISH PRAYER REQUESTS

Contact the parish office at 212-988-8300, ext. 184, to add a name to this list. Due to space constraints, names will be removed periodically to make room for others.

Margaret Cuddy
Anthony Fantozzi
Aleida Fernandez
Trudy Guida
Lester Jordan
Amelia Jane Lee
Cherylann Lino
Janice Lynch
Valerie McIntosh
Meredith Meyer
Charlie O'Connell
Mary Osso
Paulette Racine

Please pray for the repose of the souls of our recently deceased, especially Maria Aoua.

As is our mission, we continue to pray for the sick, the dying, and their families in Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York Presbyterian Hospital, Hospital for Special Surgery, and Rockefeller Hospital.

MASS INTENTIONS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16: 33RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
9:00 AM For the patrons of the Shrine of Saint Jude
Noon For the people of Saint Catherine of Siena
5:15 PM For all the Deceased

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17: ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY
7:00 AM Province of Saint Joseph and all deceased Dominican Benefactors and Associates
Noon For all the Deceased
5:15 PM † Stanley Marchewka

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18: WEEKDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
7:00 AM For all the Deceased
Noon † Natalie Frankowski
5:15 PM † Michael McCullagh

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19: WEEKDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
7:00 AM For all the Deceased
Noon † Eddie & Frances Lake
5:15 PM † Garrett Bender

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20: WEEKDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
7:00 AM For all the Deceased
Noon For the intentions of the Hoffmeister Family
5:15 PM † BJ & Ray Langer

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21: THE PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
7:00 AM For all the Deceased
Noon Saint Catherine of Siena Purgatorial Society
5:15 PM † Frederick Padovano

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22: ST. CECILIA
Noon For all the Deceased
5:15 PM For the intentions of Annamarie Strain on her birthday

MASS INTENTIONS

The Mass Intention book for 2015 is open. The offering for a Mass is $15.00. Masses can be reserved in the Parish Office.

CANDLE INTENTIONS

The Sanctuary Lamp and the Blessed Virgin Mary Candle burn for the intentions of any parishioner or in memory of any of our deceased. The offering is $30.00 for one week, Sunday through Saturday. Candles can be reserved in the Parish Office.

THIS WEEK, THE SANCTUARY LAMP IS OFFERED FOR THE REPOSE OF THE SOUL OF NYMPHA LEANO.

Thank you for your continued support of Saint Catherine's!

November 9, 2014

Regular Collection: $5,432.00

Join us on a Journey to the Heart of Faith

November 20 • It's All About God

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
Preaching on the Beauty of Catholicism
Compline and Benediction

THURSDAYS AT 7:00 P.M.
September 11 - November 20

Schola Catarina



The music program is looking for enthusiastic and committed singers to start Schola Catarina, Saint Catherine's volunteer choir. No prior experience is necessary, but interested parishioners will be asked to complete a form and to sing for Daniel, Director of Music at Saint Catherine's. If you are interested in joining, please catch Daniel in the vestibule right after Mass or contact him at *dsanez@stcatherinenyc.org*.

3rd Annual Christmas Fair 2014

Planning for the Third Annual Christmas Fair (November 22-23, 2014) continues! Donations of gift certificates, tickets, hand-crafted items, and your time as a volunteer are needed. For more information, please contact Kim Quatela (347-537-9798) or Fran Warga (212-535-4029). Sign up after all the Masses this weekend to volunteer at the fair for as little as a couple of hours!

NEXT PLANNING MEETING
Tuesday, November 18 • 7:30 p.m.
All Are Welcome!!!

Our Christmas Fair Needs Your Donations!

Gift Certificates	Theater Tickets
Bottles of Wine & Liquor	Household or Kitchen Items
Gift Baskets	Christmas Items
Jewelry	Homemade Crafts
Electronic Gifts	Baked Goods
Television	Sports Memorabilia
Laptop or Tablet Computer	Amazon/Best Buy Gift Cards
Sports Tickets	Other New or Used Gifts

All donations are tax-deductible and can be dropped off at the Parish Office during the week, or at the Church Sacristy on the weekend.

Saint Catherine's 3rd Annual

Christmas Fair

Saturday, November 22
Sunday, November 23
10 a.m.– 7 p.m.

Make your Christmas shopping easy!
The Fair offers a great selection of:

- *Christmas ornaments*
- *Holiday religious items*
- *Rosaries, medals and prayer cards*
- *Handcrafted crocheted/knitted gifts*
- *Holiday wreaths and poinsettias*
- *Homemade baked treats*
- *$10 and under table*
- *Jewelry and accessories*
- *50/50 Raffle*
- *Fabulous raffle prizes including an* ***Apple iPad***

Please save the date for these upcoming parish events:

November 16	*Schola Dominicana* Concert
November 22-23	Christmas Fair
November 27	Thanksgiving Day Mass ~ 10:00 AM
December 13	Lessons and Carols

LITURGICAL MINISTERS FOR NOVEMBER 22-23: SOLEMNITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

Date	*Lector*	*EMHC/Deacon*	*Server/Acolyte*	*Sacristan*	*Greeter*	*Usher*
November 22 5:15 PM	E. Barba	Are you called to serve?	Are you called to serve?	G. Jackson S. Woods	G. Jackson S. Woods	G. Jackson
November 23 9:00 AM	M. Greene	Are you called to serve?	C. Lane	M. Silverstein	C. Wishrad L. DeGracia	W. Coto
November 23 12:00 PM	A. Brown	H. Cox-Nadel	S. Quatela M. Inghirami L. Uva	M. Silverstein	H. Cox-Nadel E. Malave M. Malave	M. Silverstein
November 23 5:15 PM	Singles for Christ	Singles for Christ	Singles for Christ B. Perrin M. Sonnick	Singles for Christ	Singles for Christ	Singles for Christ

Are You Called to Serve?

New Liturgical Ministers Are Needed!

Parishioners are invited to consider becoming a lector, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (EMHC), usher or greeter to assist at our liturgies at St. Catherine's. Young adult males and boys in 4th grade or higher are invited to learn more about becoming an Altar Server. If you think you may have an interest in volunteering in one of the liturgical ministries, please email Steve Quatela at *quatelas@mskcc.org.*



Holy Baptism

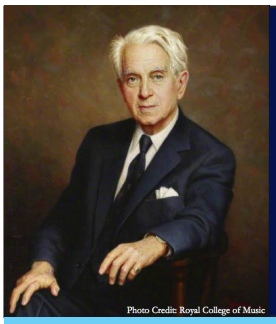
Congratulations to Edgar & Rhea Rey on the Baptism of their son, Caleb Marcus, and to Steve & Kim Quatela, on the Baptism of their son, Michael Benedict.

ST. MARTIN'S BAGS



It's that time again when we can help our brothers and sisters in Christ! In celebration of the Feast of St. Martin, defender of the poor, we will be collecting much-needed supplies for the needy of our neighborhood. Please drop off your collection bag with needed items at the Parish Office.

Our collection will continue until Sunday, November 16th. Thank you for your generosity!


Photo Credit: Royal College of Music

Schola Dominicana of the Church of Saint Catherine of Siena presents

The Music of Herbert Howells

TODAY! November 16, 2014
1:00 - 1:30 PM

During the month of November, Schola Dominicana remembers the deceased by performing Howells' haunting ***Requiem***, in a program also featuring Come, My Soul; Blessed Are the Dead; and Haec Dies.

This half-hour concert is free and open to the public. Freewill donations are most gratefully accepted.

Living Long and Prospering

By Angela Rossetti, MBA, MBE

Contributing Author for Dominican Friars Health Care Ministry of New York

Live long and prosper. This is a phrase made familiar by a 1960s science fiction television show. The phrase and the show captured the excitement of living a long and active life. Implicit in the phrase was personal contribution to one's economic wealth, but also to one's spiritual and intellectual life. *Prosper* implies flourishing, thriving, growth.

But bioethicist Ezekiel Emmanuel, M.D., believes that living long is antithetical to prospering.[1] Dr. Emmanuel suggests that living past 75 is too long. Past 75, we cannot prosper, he believes. Past 75, we can only be like an old, squared off automobile — a physical drag on society.

Dr. Emmanuel sadly assumes that infirmity and age are in opposition to personal value. He attributes no wisdom or grace to the elderly, nor does he recognize that there are insights and depth that arise from disability. He does not know that the blind may actually see humans more clearly, as Helen Keller famously did. Nor does he understand that severely handicapped individuals — even with diseases like ALS — may actively contribute to society. ALS-disabled astrophysicist Stephen Hawking has contributed to the popular understanding of science for years. As Hawking is now 73, does Emmanuel really believe Hawking should stop taking his supportive medications and cease using his synthetic speech device? Does he really believe that Hawking has nothing else to say and no example to set?

We cannot all be Stephen Hawking or Helen Keller. Most of us just put one increasingly arthritic foot in front of the other as we age, and deal with pain and limitations along the way. But if we can no longer dance, or sing, or are unstable on our feet, should we stop all interventions and wait to die as Emmanuel suggests?

Perhaps we need to learn to take infirmity with grace. The hairs on our head are numbered, said Christ. Can we learn to appreciate the gift of life even when we no longer have the thick mane of youth? Can we learn to align our suffering with that of Christ himself?

I believe God challenges us to make the most of our lives no matter what state we are in. Healthcare and medication may heal or save our physical bodies. And even when we can no longer think and medications offer little hope for recovery, our very presence will remind those of good faith that we are *all* fragile, young and old alike. Each of us is just one car accident, one fall, one microbe away from being in the same state as the feeble elderly. We all need to learn to appreciate the good of life, even if we are no longer physically whole.

Ignatius of Loyola, permanently wounded in medieval battle, was given to reflection during his recovery. Indeed, it was his changed body that led to his journey towards sainthood. His former physical self would never reappear; in its stead, wisdom, knowledge and patience arrived:

> "The goal of our life is to live with God forever.
>
> ...All the things in this world are gifts of God, presented to us so that we can know God more easily and make a return of love more readily.
>
> As a result, we appreciate and use all these gifts of God insofar as they help us develop as loving persons…. We should not fix our desires on health or sickness, wealth or poverty, success or failure, a long life or short one. For everything has the potential of calling forth in us a deeper response to our life in God."[2]

It is easy to fear the inevitable decline that comes with age and such fear might incline one to agree with Dr. Emmanuel. But it is when we are older that our mettle reaches its peak. When we are "less than perfect" we are continually challenged to grow from the inside. Meeting our challenges holds a mirror to us and to the society in which we live. Being "less than perfect" is yet another form of suffering — suffering that can bring forth the life of the spirit: "…the right relationship of matter to spirit will be experienced by those who generously give themselves to the interior work of love…"[3]

The value of life is not how long we live, but how our life leads us to the goal for which we are intended—union with God. As we wend our way to our God we might remember John Ruskin's quote: "Every noble life leaves the fiber of it interwoven for ever in the work of the world."[4] Those who have taken the journey to the outer reaches of age may give themselves over to that interior work of love. In the process, age may help to lead all of us. There is no prospering richer than that.

[1] http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/09/why-i-hope-to-die-at-75/379329/

[2] The First Principle and Foundation, St Ignatius Loyola, in *Hearts on Fire, Praying with the Jesuits*, St. Louis, 1993.

[3] Johnston, W: ed. *The Cloud of Unknowing*, 1973, from a fourteenth century anonymous text

[4] Ruskin, J: Proserpina: *Studies of Wayside Flowers*, Wiley, 1875.