Saint Valentine

Although we live in a secular culture, how fortunate two winter Saints days have endured: Saints Valentine and and Saint Patrick.

Delayed Valentine Greetings!

Saint Paint Paul reminds us today that if Christ is not risen, our faith is in vain,and the new year has already seen the passing of .five of my old friends:

+ Bill Kochanowicz whose marriage I presided at over 50 years ago/

+ Marie Novak one of my Scottsdale House flock.

+ Frank Fox, another of my Scottsdale House Flock

and + Tony Bianchi an "anam cara" soul friend for 60 years.

And in 2018: + Bishop Anthony Milone, another anam cara,Â Â the last of my college classmates.

Saint Paul reminds us today that if there is no resurrection, our faith is in vain.

This reflection is pertinent for me since 2019 has seen so many losses of dear friends who have brightened my path

And there never is any making of NEW--OLD FRIENDS.

I was blest to be able to give the last anointing to four of these dear friends--and to Tony Bianchi in Omaha a few hours beore he died.

Today's Gospel contains what John Powell described as the BE-Attitudes.

And they are contrary to what we ordinarily would expect.

So when you are going against the grain, doing the unexpected,

or acting in a counter cultural manner....Right on! You are living out the Beatitudes!

And so we pray:

Dear God,

help me to turn away

from the stampede of the crowd:

all rushing toward prestige,

toward flattery,

toward vanity,

toward worldly accolades.

Show me the contrary path

with the Beatitudes as my road signs.

They all point me in your direction.

Amen

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