



Advent Reflection

Day #16

Monday, December 14

Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a; Matthew 21:23-27

In the Gospels, the Lord is often referred to as, “Rabbi”, which means Teacher and if we give Him permission, He shows us the Way to Eternal Life. One lesson changed my lifeforever. In October 1979, Pope John Paul II visited Chicago. I was a parishioner at St. Mary of the Woods at the time and we were so excited that his route from O’Hare would come down Milwaukee Avenue and a large contingent of neighbors met to greet him. Although we only caught a glimpse of him, his presence inspired us all as we listened closely to his message at his many Masses while here. One stayed with me after he left. He said, “When you give, do so from your substance and not your leftovers.”

During this same time, a few of our parish families, including mine, worked with Catholic Charities to sponsor families fleeing the unresolved conflict in Viet Nam. One of my neighbors had need of baby clothes since her sponsored family had a newborn baby girl. I had a baby daughter a few months before and blest with many gifts. One was a white hooded sweater with roses for buttons. It was beautiful and I loved it!

Remembering the Pope’s words, I put the hooded white sweater in the donation bag then I took it out of the donation bag...it was in, it was out. Finally, my friend picked up my donations one of the times, the sweater was in the bag and I must say I was just a little disappointed. A few weeks passed and my friend’s sponsored family lost their little daughter to a heart Infection but not before baptized Suzanne.

Catholic Charities helped us wake and bury her in the Catholic Church. As I approached her little coffin my breath left me, and tears sprung to my eyes. Suzanne was wearing the little white hooded sweater with roses for buttons; the very one I, aguishly, donated. Yes, the Lord does guide us in His truth and teaches us in ways that change us forever.

Reflection by Holy Name Cathedral Parishioner Joyce Gallagher