

Pastor's Column

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Fr. Ken Kieffer – Resting In Peace



This Thursday, January 31, will mark the first anniversary of Fr. Ken's death. In the past year, I know that all of us have had a variety of moments and situations in which we have experienced his absence and grieved his loss.

His exit of this world and his journey Home created an empty space in our hearts and in our lives. It is never easy to lose a loved one, but, because we are people of faith, we are mindful that one day we will be reunited in the fullness of the presence of God. Our faith provides hope and encouragement to move forward as we continue on our earthly pilgrimage when a loved ones dies.

Fr. Henri Nouwen, once said, *"Each time that we experience the death of a loved one, just a little bit more of eternity breaks into our own existence."*

Fr. Ken's death took place on the anniversary of my Ordination, and I see his death on that date as gift of serendipity given to me to strengthen me as I move into my "senior years."

Mike and Natalie Provinse, two brother priests of Fr. Ken's Religious Order, and I were present at his moment of death. For the five us, it was a very moving experience that touched us deeply. For me, personally, I felt that his spirit and the love of his pastoral ministry were passed on to me as a gift to strengthen me in my pastoral responsibilities.

Fr. Ken's "retirement" was a complete commitment to pastoral ministry, to the people of St. Thomas More, and to so many other people throughout the wider community. He was a shining example to younger priests, inspiring them, inspiring me, that the "best is yet to come," even after and during retirement.

As I celebrate my 33rd anniversary of Ordination this Thursday, I will remember Fr. Ken, toast him, and once again thank him for all that he has done for all us, and for me. Please join me in that toast and in that prayer!

Eternal Rest grant unto Fr. Ken Kieffer, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace! Amen.

Fr. Mike