

## Mercy

“For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.”

A quick search revealed there are over one hundred verses in the Word, our Bible, that say either this exact quote – one attributed to Hosea – or something very similar.

As I was looking for something else this morning, I found part of a Thesis paper I wrote as I attempted to get my Masters in Theology at Catholic Distance University back in two thousand and seven.

It was about my Mom.

Patti was a mother, first and foremost. She lived a life rich in faith, faith that to her, was a way of life. She devoted much of her time here in prayer to God for those she loved, particularly her husband of fifty-two years and her children. She sacrificed a lot for them throughout her life, certainly any chance at a career and provided financially for her children to her own detriment.

She survived several bouts with cancer but not her last one. Diagnosed with an unknown form of brain cancer she made the choice with the full support of her children to pursue any and all means of a cure, subjecting herself to experimental procedures that while not painful, were certainly tedious. This despite for the last five years of her life, she only wanted to be, again, with Big Al, my Dad.

Her disease claimed her consciousness in the last week of her time here, on planet earth. She existed in a semi coma state, barely able to be fed by her children and relying on them for her most basic needs, including such things of having them clean her up after loss of bowel and urinary continence. Her last lucid conversation was with her only granddaughter, on Mother’s Day, six days before she died.

The children had decided to keep her in one of their homes with both of them sharing in the care of her. When her physical state became clear to all, particularly her doctors, that she was dying and quickly, the children chose to make full use of suggestions by Hospice, including the use of medications that eased her physical anxiety. They did this with the knowledge that if she had enough consciousness to decide herself, she would chose to suffer and probably not take the medications.

The children chose to ease her suffering. They showed mercy.

In hindsight, what seemed to be an eternity of intense mentally and physically taxing care, turned out to be a very quick trial ending in the ultimate mercy of God, Who took her with her children by her side, clean and peaceful, with a moment of lucidity at the very end that confirmed her lifelong motherly love.

She gazed first at one child then the other. As she looked at the second, he couldn’t help noticing not just the sweet smile, but even more so her eyes. He could see stars in them. Millions and millions. Then she gently closed them and breathed her last.

A woman of unrelenting mercy that filled her life received in full, the mercy of her family and most importantly, the Divine Mercy of her God, our God.

She died at 3:17 PM, Irish to the last.

***Divine Mercy. Divine Mercy. Divine Mercy...***

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