

Aging

Our materialistic, contemporary American culture views aging as a necessary inconvenience, a process to try to cover up. On the other hand, our Christian perspective sees age as a blessing. Life is a gift, and those who have lived many years have been greatly gifted. (Admittedly, parts of this gift we must struggle to accept.)

"If you look back, you will see that your whole life is a story of God's love coming upon you in successive stages." Those words of Pope John Paul II towards the end of his earthly life reveal the depth and brilliance of the Christian perspective.

Can you relate to his words? Have you seen your life in those terms? When could you take a moment to review the story of God's love "coming upon you" throughout your life? Hopefully, you will share parts of your story with family members, friends, parishioners, or someone in a nursing home or prison. Imagine the inspiration your sharing could be to a grandchild or grandniece or nephew preparing for Confirmation, relatives about to enter the Sacrament of Marriage, or an unchurched neighbor.

Through letters, memoirs, video-tape, e-mail, or phone conversations, your telling of God's coming through your life events can help build up the Church. The world is desperate for stories of love, true stories with all the struggle and surprises that comprise a life of faith.

Please read the following letters at www.usccb.org:

"Letter to the Elderly" from Pope John Paul II

"Blessings of Age" from the U.S. Bishops

BOOKS: (Can be borrowed by mail from the Family Life Office)

From My Youth: Prayers as I Grow Old by William Rabior

Harvest Us Home: Good News as We Age by Rea McDonnell & Rachel Callahan