

Bishop's Message for October 2010

[I am sharing a prayer that was part of my devotions a few days ago. It is attributed to a Mother Superior who lived in the seventeenth century. I hope you find its wisdom and insight an inspiration to you. - +RBM]

“Lord, you know better than I know myself that I am growing older, and will some day be old. Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Keep my mind from the recital of endless details – give me wings to come to the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. But seal my lips on my own aches and pains – they are increasing, and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. Help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint – some of them are so hard to live with – but a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

Make me thoughtful – but not moody: helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but thou knowest Lord, that I want a few friends at the end. Amen.”

[For All The Saints: A Prayer Book For and By the Church, Volume IV: Year 2, compiled and edited by Frederick J. Schumacher with Dorothy A. Zelenko, published by The American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, Third Printing, 2005. Page 796]

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