

January 16, 2011 – A Word from Canon Warren

Now that Christmas is over, let's talk about you dying. Well, Happy New Year to you, too! Seriously, even if we all live to be 100, we only have a little while left to live. Most people over 30 either have or should have a will. So many people never have anything to do with writing their own obituary or planning their own funeral. Unfortunately, it gets left to those they love the most at the most inopportune time. Spouses in the most emotional time possible have to plan the funeral, think of hymns and Scripture readings and pallbearers, and write an obituary for the newspaper; and the departed have had no say in what (if anything) they wanted.

From my experience, I advise that you plan ahead for the sake of your family. Do your obituary and plan your funeral. File it away. Believe me, doing so will save your loved ones a great deal of grief and trouble. Any clergy person here or Stephen Schaeffer or Charles Kennedy can help you plan the service. It is much easier to make some simple changes at the last moment than to plan the entire thing under duress. Advance planning is one of the greatest final gifts you can give to your family, and it is never too early to do. People die at all ages, and generally the younger they die, the more trauma and emotion swirls around the event.

I would also suggest that every young person buy long-term care. The younger you are, the less expensive it is. The cost of care for the aged is soaring, and the more thought you give this issue ahead of time, the better. There are some very good companies with excellent long-term care packages available. Any good nursing home can cost more than \$7,000 per month plus medications. One can only imagine what it will cost 10, 20, 30 years from now. Twenty-four hour sitter care at home can cost \$150,000 per year or more. You can more than double that in 10–20 years.

The ultimate package is *free*, and the cost was borne by another: our Lord! The gift you can give to your family before you cross over may be the gift of a lifetime. We are here to help you.

Love in Christ,
Joseph P.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live." - John 11:25