

June 5, 2010

Dear Friends,

As most in the parish know, St. Stephen's Sr. Warden Bill Coop is dying of cancer at Kaiser Hospital in Vallejo. I gave him Extreme Unction last night with Elaine and Noah participating. Bill still had the cognitive capacity to ask for the sacrament when offered and to participate in it fully, but that capacity is fading fast as the tumors grow in his brain and in his bones. It has been a lightning quick illness. Three weeks ago he thought he had a cold. 11 days ago a doctor told him his back pain was most likely sciatica. The diagnosis of cancer was made only a week ago. Your prayers for Bill and Elaine and their whole extended family are greatly appreciated, as are the visits many of you have made to his bedside. Don't stop. The message of the Incarnation, Passion & Resurrection of Our Lord is that Life is a precious gift and we must never take it for granted. We must love truly and faithfully while there is yet time. Our prayers are one of the most important ways we do so. Please pray for Peace at the Last for Bill, solace in grief for Elaine, and strength for the younger Coop men as they deal with all the petty details of demise. And pray also for healing for others suffering the many and varied forms of this terrible disease that with such dark eloquence proves the Fall - the Human Body's defenses in overdrive destroying the very Life they were designed to protect. The Enemy is powerful. He mocks us with such perversions; but our Lord, the Lord of Love and of Life, has on Easter morn the last laugh, the child's laughter of Hope and Rebirth and Newness of Life. He mocks Death and its Prince and so must we. As our friends pass, with the Mark of Faith we say not goodbye, but adios, adieu: "To God," for that is to Whom we go to rest in the Sleep of Peace...and may Light Perpetual shine upon us this day...and always.

Amen+

Fr. Mike+