

Attitudes on Aging

Sometimes I think that our current cultural attitude about aging seems to contradict the Good News of Christ. We see aging as the bad thief in the night coming to take from us. This view sees no good in aging...all is negative about aging...all is loss.

So, one might ask, why does God allow aging? If God ordains aging then there must be a purpose.

As enlightened Christians we are asked to see aging differently than the world sees it. We know that God wants the best for us; that our life is a journey toward God and that our very maturation process, whatever stage or phase we happen to be in right now, is a blessed part of that journey.

We believe then that the very process of aging calls us to better understand our authentic self, the uniqueness that God has implanted in us. Aging then does have a purpose...aging is a beautiful extension of the ongoing process of growing closer to Christ.

But what about the losses that aging brings...certainly our body diminishes; have you noticed that some parts of our body are getting thicker and other parts are getting thinner as we age? And even our minds may diminish...we don't remember names and dates like we used to.

We are called in the aging process to give-up, to lose so many things. Yet, what are these losses? Are they rude tricks of nature, or even torments of the soul; or are these losses actually invitations for deeper understanding of our path to God?

When we look at aging through human eyes only we're tempted to see aging as something that makes us more dependent, even helpless...Yet, when we look through God's eyes (if we can), might this loss be an invitation to trust God deeper?

Human eyes see aging as negative, making us feel ignored, or isolated, even alienated. Through God's eyes we see an invitation to focus more on our inner life.

Aging may make us feel devalued, perhaps like we have nothing to offer...but in God's eyes we're called to let-go of what formerly defined us and grasp God's endless consolation.

We may feel unimportant or powerless, sometimes even useless...yet are we being called to embrace God's unconditional love, to accept God with new strength, and to experience interior peace and God's love with new fervor?

You may be tempted to feel disconnected, sad, lonely, or even abandoned...yet, aren't these all new calls to reconnect more deeply with God in the present life?

Aging can be tough when we only see it through human eyes, but when we ascend to view aging differently, through God's eyes becomes something so much more...it becomes a gift to aspire to new heights of peace, and perseverance, and courage, and seeing the grandeur of God in entirely new ways.

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Oct. 20, 2014