



NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

August 11, 2024

St. James Catholic Church

*3909 Harrison * Kansas City, Missouri 64110*

"Small enough to know your name, big enough to make a difference."

Reflection from Denise Simeone

My friend Cele was a procrastinator — a wonderful procrastinator, but nonetheless a master procrastinator. She waited to see what might come at the last minute, a new idea just around the corner. That way, she got it all in. But the truth be told - she always had a bunch of other things to do, usually that were more fun - than the project or the class or report that was due.

Cele loved the Scriptures. She was immersed in them. She read, studied and prayed with them exploring new insights into them and taught others to do the same. Over the last 25 years Cele and I used Scripture passages of Advent and Lent to offer retreats. Though they were familiar passages, it was the discussion or mind mapping we did to prepare that enabled us to be surprised by something fresh in them, like finding a buried treasure, a lost coin, a treasured pearl, or a beloved lost sheep. Maybe it was something that Cele even discovered at the last minute because she was open to that possibility.

She was a dreamer especially about how God was revealing the Spirit of God in the world. She was a team player, a collaborator doing whatever had to be done - from using her gift for calligraphy to hauling tables and chairs. She was a wonderful teacher and mentor. Often when speaking she hardly ever finished a sentence. She'd have so many thoughts in her head that she'd move on to another idea without completing the thought on the first idea. Her imagination ran far ahead of her speech ability!

My last visit with Cele was the Saturday night before she died. She was in bed and somewhat restless. I was pretty sure it would be my last visit since I was leaving town a couple days later (though given her tenacity I would not have put it past her to be still around when I got back in two weeks!) I sang her songs that we both knew and loved from retreats and celebrations. I reminded her of all the people waiting — family and friends among the communion of saints.

That last night I told her she had procrastinated many times before pulling off many wonderful things but this was one thing she could not keep procrastinating about forever. I said goodbye. (I was not surprised to hear that she rallied for a few more visits over the next couple of days for friends and family.) She savored every moment and every friendship to the last drop like fine wine and good bread, both of which she loved.

Her community quoted Daniel 12:3 for her obituary. "She used her insight and wisdom, both gifts given her by the Creator God to shine and lead and serve faithfully, bringing many to justice and righteousness."

Now may she shine as brightly as the stars forever and ever.