

One of my favorite things to do when I've been in a parish with a school is to sit in on kindergarten. I was always in awe of how the teacher would ask the students things that we as adults took for granted.

*How many months are there? What day of the week is it?*

*How many days in this month? How many days of the week are there?*

*When is Christmas? Who's birthday is this month?*

For us as adults, these things are practically assumed. Yet for these young children this was a bold, new discovery ... this was an acquisition of stunning insight ... of new knowledge.

Andrea recognized this newness, too, when she worked with children.

She said, *"I am happiest when I am with the little children. They are the freshest from the hands of God."*

What a wonderful realization for us all as adults. I think we all need to be reminded of this.

Andrea loved children, whether in school or in the parish faith formation program ... her own children, or especially her grandchildren. She used to say *"If I'd known that grandchildren were this wonderful, I would have had them first!"*

In the Gospel reading, we hear Jesus say:

*I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike.*

Andrea had this gift ... this grace ... in working with children and in teaching children ... she experienced a constant revelation of "newness" in life that often escapes most of us adults.

And in giving of herself in service to the education of children, she taught us what St. Paul tells us today; that, *[n]one of us lives for [them]self*. And perhaps we also need to remember the rest of what St. Paul says, which is: *if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's*.

Andrea's also loved the Lord, and the Church, and the Faith. Not only in leading Faith Formation, but also as a lector at Mass, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, and in working with children's liturgy of the word.

And it is in that Faith that we all join together today ... as we accompany her with our prayers ... as she moves through this final journey to new life in Jesus Christ.

May our prayers go with her ... and may she echo the words of the Prophet Isaiah ... when she stands before the throne of God:

*Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us!*

*This is the LORD for whom we looked;*

*let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!*

Let us remain united with Andrea through prayer and Faith. May our Faith console us in this time of grief. And let us never forget to continue to express the love that has begun and trust in her prayers for us.