

**Funeral Mass for Msgr. Leo Dolan
Friday, October 28, 2016**

“It is finished.” Those words are so powerful. They shook the world and changed it forever. When Jesus surrendered his spirit to death, he destroyed death forever. But in that moment those who loved him wept and mourned. They knew the power of God, but it did not mean they were not saddened by his passing. That is where we are left today. We are here in mourning over the loss of our dear brother Msgr. Leo. We join with our Mother Mary and the other women who stood by the cross in mourning over the death of our Lord. But my friends, even in our sadness, we are here not just for mourning, but to remember our hope. Death is not the end of us. Death is not the end of Msgr. Dolan.

The scriptures promise this. “On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations. He will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces; the reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the Lord has spoken.” This is why we are here at this Mass together. We remember the life of our brother, our priest, our friend. We pray for him and we offer our love for him. We do this in faith of God’s promise. For us, death is a change and a new beginning, not an end. Death cannot end us who are in Christ Jesus, as our dear Msgr. Leo is.

For his 50th Anniversary of priesthood, Msgr. wrote a letter to the faithful in which he shared the words he had printed on his ordination cards at the start of his ministry. He wrote: “By the grace of God I became a Priest.” He continued in the letter saying, “The many whom God has committed to my charge and company over the years, are my hope and consolation; and my prayer is that some day we will meet again and mutually rejoice in the Beatific Vision.” Msgr. Dolan is ministering to us even today at his funeral, reminding us of our hope and consolation. Fr. Leo trusted in the Lord, and lived his priesthood with faithfulness as a gift from God. His words of faith echo the words of the Holy Father, Pope Francis: “Our loved ones have not disappeared into dark nothingness: Hope assures us that that they are in God's good and strong hands. Love is stronger than death.” May we heed these wise words and keep our hope in the Lord's promise.

Dear friends, remember Msgr. Leo with love today. Even in our mourning, let that love strengthen your faith in our God. Msgr. trusted in the Lord who will “make all things new.” We entrust him to our beloved Mother, Our Lady of Knock, Our Lady of Guadalupe. May she who mourned and trusted in her Divine Son, present Msgr. Leo to the Lord in heaven. May this be a celebration of the witness of our dear brother in this life. Praise be to the God of Heaven who makes all things new.