

Item #111 (Legitimacy on the Other Side of Death)

Old age is presenting many challenges to this person who can legitimately say he belongs to the category. (See Item #72). I am not alone in living out my life to its inevitable conclusion. I am housed with dozens of other Jesuits, and though all of us not victims of Alzheimer's Disease indulge in reminiscences on hundreds of years of Jesuit ministry lived in a great variety of ways, seeing something or meeting someone "on the other side of death" has become a major concern. Being a "companion" of Jesus, that is, a Jesuit, in this life in an intelligent way is a constant challenge; being a "companion" of Jesus "on the other side of death" presumably involves knowing what it is to be a son of a Father Who insists on living up to standards which are appropriate for One who is Love personified. This is the Person I have kept addressing as "Father" for the whole of my life, as has every true Christian. But I have done so also as one who has lived a life of pledged celibacy, as have many others. Now I am ready, hopefully, to find out what this means "on the other side of death". (Fr. James Swetnam, S.J., March 5, 2024)