

PRAYING ABOUT MY OWN DEATH

From Choosing Christ in the World, by Joseph Tetlow, SJ

-As always, I come into God's presence, offer Him my whole self, and compose my sinful self in this sin-filled world.

-Then I ask God that thinking about my own coming death might deepen my understanding of sin and move me further and further away from it.

-Choose one of the following scenarios:

-Using my fantasy, I imagine that I lie dying in a hospital. How am I connected? Am I clearheaded or filled with drugs? Have I left things in order, or scattered and unfinished? How old am I, and who of my friends and family are around?

-Imagine that I am Lazarus, waiting for Jesus who does not come, and lying stiff on the cold stone with all my frozen fears—and then feeling His voice fill me with warm life. Would Lazarus ever have feared death again? Would he have seen his life world and its values and concerns as he had before? What would it have taken to really trouble him then?

-Count the number of ways I might very well die on the most ordinary of days. How does that change the way I think of "ordinary days" and my everyday world?

-Or write my own obituary or an article reporting my own death. How does that make me feel? What would I want to blot out of what I did? What would I wish with all my heart I could include? Then, I will consider whether there are some things I ought to put my mind to.

-Then, I ask myself: What would I like to have done between now and that event? What will I be glad to have done or left undone? What attitudes or actions would make me fear on that bed? What will seem valuable to me lying there? What will appear in all its true slightness and foolishness?

-After considering that, I make the Triple Colloquy.