Now that I am older, I can look back on my life and clearly remember times when I took great pride in my accomplishments, the breadth of my knowledge, and my insight into human dynamics. The problem was that my pride bordered on, and occasionally slipped into, a sense of superiority and hubris. At such times I was not fun to be around. The advantage of maturity is that we become more aware of our shortcomings and, hopefully, develop a humility that appreciates the gifts that everyone brings to the table, recognizes that we always have more to learn, and grows grateful, rather than prideful, at the gifts we have been given.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus challenges the sense of pride that the Israelites feel from God’s choosing them and the sense that they are, therefore, better than the people of the surrounding nations. He also questions their habit of judging those on whom misfortune fell as more sinful than they were. In a way, he was asking them to grow up and find the humility that comes from age, holding them to the same standard with which they held others. He challenged them to spend less time judging others and more time recognizing their sins and need for repentance.

That’s a hard lesson for us all, but a necessary one. If we are to accompany one another on this journey through Lent and life, we need to know we are all the same in God’s eyes and all in need of God’s grace to make it through.

MARY KATHARINE DEELEY
sundaybulletin@liguori.org

A Word From Pope Francis
"Old age is—as I like to say—the seat of life’s wisdom. The old have acquired the wisdom that comes from having journeyed through life....And that wisdom enabled them to recognize Jesus. Let us pass on this wisdom to the young."

— Audience with the College of Cardinals, March 11, 2013