

A couple of good friends of the Diocese recently passed away; one was sudden and without warning, the other a little less shocking. My heart immediately went out to the families and as I prayed for them, I began reflecting on my own family's journey. Most recently, when I helped my mom grieve the loss of her parents while she and her sister had to close their parents' estate and plan their services. I was taken aback at what seemed like the never ending list of logistical tasks that needed to be done, especially after my Grandfather's death left my Grandmother alone for several years until she also passed away this past summer. All the pieces that came with each of their passings seemed urgent and confusing because our hearts were aching with the desire and responsibility to care for them.

Fortunately, my grandparents had made some choices and arrangements during their end-of-life planning that came as a relief for us amidst all the decision making. My Grandfather was an attorney and made sure they had an up-to-date will and trust that not only helped keep the peace amongst our family members but also reminded us of all the things that were important to my grandparents. We had their legacy plan right before us and now our only job was to ensure it was carried out. Reflecting on the organizations they supported and how important their parish was to them gave us some much needed light and hope.

As you start to work through your list of New Year's resolutions, I'd invite you to consider adding one more item - to update your will. I have shared the Diocese's trusted partner, FreeWill, with you before, and as a reminder it is a **free** estate-planning tool that only takes about 20 minutes to complete. You'll have one resolution checked off in no time! I'd encourage you to start planning your legacy by visiting <https://www.freewill.com/diocs>.

Your planned legacy could truly be a guiding light for your family. I know it was for my family.

Many Blessings,

Jamie