

FUNERAL HOMILY – WILLIAM BRENNAN R.I.P.

Gunnersbury Cemetery – Monday 18th May 2020

It's not as if your family name didn't tell me, but when I saw the flags on the cars following the hearse, and then the tricolour on the coffin, I knew exactly where you came from.

Where we come from is important, not just the country, but even more important is the family we come from. The parents who gave us life, the home we grew up in, these taught us all the important lessons in life, including the most important – how to love. The Bible encourages us to “remember the rock from which you were hewn” (Is 51.1-2). So let us give thanks for William and give thanks for the role he has played in the lives of you all: his wife, his children and his grandchildren. And if there were things that didn't work out as well as they might have done, then this is the time to pray for forgiveness. May we be as forgiving and as grateful to him, to William, as we would want people to be to us. Let us give thanks to God for all the blessings he received and shared.

But even more important than where we come from is where we are going. Where are we going? What are we doing with our lives? An awareness of God's plan for us helps us respond to him and to those around us in a generous and compassionate way. As at the beginning of our life God calls us into being, so he is calling us now to look forward and prepare to be with him at the end of our life. Our destiny is eternity.

So let us pray that William may be welcomed by his God into the eternal life we are all called to. Let us pray for ourselves too - that we will, all of us, one day be with God for ever, in heaven. And how will we get there? Well, didn't we hear in the Gospel, Jesus telling his disciples, telling us: “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” (Jn 14.6) May Jesus, in his loving forgiving kindness, be, both for William and for us, our Way, our Truth, our Life.