

A Coffee with Alessio



All Souls' Day

Today we commemorate the souls of all the faithful departed (hence the violet border). During November we remember them in our prayers and Masses. As we approach this feast day I am mindful of those funerals which I have played the organ at since All Souls' Day last year. There are those people who were young and old, and those people who were fit and healthy and those who endured a long illness. God always calls us when He is ready, not when we are. Nonetheless, for me the most poignant funeral I played the organ at this year was that of my own grandmother. She was very clear about how she wanted her funeral liturgy to be prepared and celebrated, and she has certainly left the rest of her family with a legacy of valuing and practicing the faith. This year I also had the privilege of playing the organ for the Requiem Mass of two Presentation Sisters. Again, these women planted seeds of faith in so many communities as they followed the call to serve the Lord and their neighbour. You too, will have commended people to the Lord's care.

So, what can the rest of us who are left behind do. We can pray for those how have gone before us, light a candle for them, treasure the good times we had, and put into practise the words of a wise unknown author:

"When someone you love becomes a memory,
the memory becomes a treasure."

In other words, let's always put into practice the many things we learned from those who have gone before us and pass that knowledge and love onto others. In this way, those who have died will never be far from us.

Earlier in the year, the singer/songwriter Avicii died. I liked his songs for I thought they always evoked a positive message. (Whilst his songs are a good source of entertainment and give us positive messages, they are best left to use outside of the liturgy.) Anyhow, one of his songs comes to mind today. His song "The Nights", contains the following message:

He said, "One day you'll leave this world behind
So live a life you will remember."

What a great piece of advice from a father to his son. Indeed, one day we will all leave this world behind. Consequently, we must live a life we will want to remember, and those around us as well. For when the Lord calls us home, we will wish people to say the world was a better place for our presence.

Let our prayer today and throughout November be:

“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them.”

So, on this All Souls' Day, I will head off to Mass later this evening to pray for my grandmother and all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith. Tomorrow, I will have a delicious Italian doughnut and cappuccino in her honour.

Mr Alessio Loiacono
Music Field Officer

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