

Funeral Homily for Emma Ashe:

I suspect that many of you who have gathered for today's funeral service remember a song first recorded by the trio of Peter, Paul and Mary and later, the recording artist, John Denver: "Leaving on a Jet Plane". The words speak of one preparing to go on a journey. He is prepared.

All my bags are packed  
I'm ready to go  
I'm standin' here outside your door  
I hate to wake you up to say goodbye

'Cause I'm leavin' on a jet plane  
Don't know when I'll be back again  
Oh babe, I hate to go

The theme of "going away" is prominent in the gospels.

### **Consider the words of Jesus:**

"Where I am going, you cannot come"

"I am going away and coming back to you"

"In a little while the world will see me no longer"

"Now I am leaving the world and going to the Father; and

"I am to stay no longer in the world but they are still in the world and I am on my way to thee (The Heavenly Father).

Jesus prepared himself for his exit from this life, and he made sure his disciples were as well. How did he do so? He prayed incessantly. His bags were packed. His earnest prayers were heard. In the gospel of Luke his last words were, "Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my Spirit".

Emma Ashe died at the age of ninety-seven. Her expected death at an advanced age has undoubtedly left you, her family and friends, in mourning. It's more than likely that her bags were packed and she was prepared for her departure, the hour of her death. She was not alone in packing her bags. Her family and friends assisted her, thus making her final journey to the other shore of life more comforting and acceptable.

You were always at her side and you prayed for her.

In the Old Testament Book of Psalms, the Hebrew poet, the Psalmist, writes, "How precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones"

Emma, rest in peace.