

Funeral homily for Owen Smith:

The production of "Cats" has long been considered one of the gems of the American Musical Theater. It is the poetry of the American born T S. Eliot set to the music of the composer, Andrew Lloyd Webber. The signature song of the show is the song "Memory". The words are luminous:

"Daylight I must wait for the sunrise

I must think of a new life

And I mustn't give in

When the dawn comes, tonight will be a memory, too

And a new day will begin"

In the 30th Psalm of the Old Testament, the Hebrew poet writes: "Weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning".

These words define the mystery of Christ's life on earth.

After the misery and desolation of Good Friday, came the resplendent joy of Easter Sunday.

It is our destiny to repeat in our own life the experience of Christ. Surely, life on earth can too often seem to be a Calvary for us but we know that Easter will follow for us as it did for Our Lord.

To once again quote the words of the song "Memory": "When the dawn comes, tonight will be a memory too, and a new day will begin".

Whenever we suffer the loss of a loved one, we are determined that they shall never be forgotten. Those we have loved continue to live in us, and we in them, in memory.

What's more, God does not suffer from amnesia, forgetfulness. In words made memorable by the prophet Isaiah, "Can a woman forget her child, be without tenderness for the child of her womb. Even should she forget, I shall; never forget you" (Is. 49:15).

On the night of the Last supper, Jesus assures his disciples that they would not be forgotten. In the face of imminent death, he said, "And If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be" (Jn.14:3).

The family of the deceased requested that trees be planted in his memory.

God does not forget.

Nor do we!

May God grant him a merciful judgment and eternal rest from all his earthly labors.