

## REMEMBERING THE DEAD WITH HOPE & JOY

### *Introduction*

My dear sisters and brothers, as we come to the Eucharist this morning, let us come with hope for ourselves and our loved ones who have passed away, knowing that the Lord Jesus assures us that he shares with them the gift of eternal life. This is a moment of thanksgiving for our family members, relatives and friends who have passed away. Let us, at the beginning of this Mass, be silent for a moment and remember all these people. We also remember all the intentions that the parish has put into these boxes for our prayer this morning. Let us remember the dead with gratitude and with hope.

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### *Homily / Reflection*

A few years ago, I was in Manila, in the Philippines, for a meeting, and it was All Souls' Day. One of the Filipino priests said to me, 'Come, let us visit the cemetery'. And when we went to the cemetery, I was surprised at the celebrations there on that day. There were families gathered around the graves of the departed, praying, sharing a meal, singing and having a joyful evening together in remembrance of their dead. As we walked, I stopped and asked some of the families what it was that brought them there. They said, 'Our remembrance of the dead is always a joyful experience'. It was wonderful to see them singing, playing guitars and enjoying their visit to the resting places of their loved ones. I thought that was a very Christian attitude towards death.

In the first reading of today, Isaiah says that God is preparing a banquet for us – a celebration for us in heaven. And so, those who have died are not in some morbid state of darkness. Every dead person returns to the source of life, the source of joy and peace. All the readings that are marked for Masses for the dead are readings that speak hope and joy. I am happy that the choir also began with a joyful song today.

As we come together to remember the dead, let us not remember them in sadness, but in hope and joy – a hope that the dead are in God, and that God gives them a joyful eternal life. Let us thank God for them and for what they meant to us. Amen.

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### *Eucharistic Prayer*

At this part of the Mass, we remember the dead. Let us in silence remember all those we have come to pray for.

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### *The Lord's Prayer*

Let us with the living and the dead join together for this morning prayer of thanksgiving for life that comes from the Father – life on earth and the eternal life. We pray in gratitude, Our Father...



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