

Tribute form Victoria

If my father were here, he would be the first to give you a very warm welcome to this wonderful Abbey which he and my mother loved so much and we are very grateful to the Dean and the Abbey for hosting this service of thanksgiving.

The Dean has just mentioned the lasting legacy of the statues of the 20th century Martyrs and thte service today reflects that. The epistle and the prayers are taken from the service of dedication of the statues. Non-will reading the epistle and Andrew Chandler and Jonathan Goodall will be reading the prayers. These three were key members of the collaboration on the martyrs that meant so much to him.

Carole Goldberg will be reading the old testament lesson on behalf of her husband Rabbi David Goldberg who was Co-President with my father of the London Society of Jews and Christians. Reaching further back Father Alban who lived as a Franciscan at St Augustine's College is reading from my father's memoirs. The Introit that you have just heard was requested in my father's funeral wishes and he loved Monteverdi.

He would be so touched that you have made the time to come here today. Although at times he could come across as slightly intimidating, he cared very deeply and we have had so many lovely letters from those who knew him attesting to that and especially how at the moment of most need, he would be there.

He was always and became increasingly hospitable. His sermon at Christmas last year just before he died was about caring, sharing, as in a mea,l and being of good cheer.

Here I must pay tribute to my mother's influence. At 3 little Cloister there could easily be people to breakfast coffee, lunch, tea and supper on most days. -- And woe betide you if you treated someone who was homeless with any less courtesy or hospitality than an admiral or a Lord or a bishop. A woe betides you if at any gathering or party you left someone standing alone without someone to talk. They loved to introduce people to others who had similar interests and create a world of friendship, and conversation. If they were here today, they would be the first to make you feel at home and introduce you to others. Memorial services can be lonely places; my parents would be delighted and it would mean so much to them if you in memory of them were to

introduce yourselves to others and you were able to share memories with those whom you had not met and maybe even make new friends and as my father would say be of good cheer.

Not only in hospitality and of course her love of art and beauty My mother inspired my father far more than many people realised. She had always loved mystical writers especially St John of the Cross which became a key book in my father's last years. It was she who discovered and loved the poetry of Dom Helder Camera, the liberation theologian/ Archbishop in Brazil, inviting him to stay and rejoicing when he blessed the delphiniums and arum lilies in her garden in Little Cloister. This led to my father's increasing interest and admiration of Romero and hence to his enthusiasms for the collaboration which created the statues of the 20th century Martyrs above the West Door.

My mother met and admired George Bell when she was in Florence with her father in the 1950's, she always loved the work of the George Bell Institute and so fittingly one of the last things that my father did before he died was to write to the church times an open letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning Bishop George Bell. The letter which was also signed by nine other theologians of distinction was published shortly after his death.

My mother believed in practical Christianity; firmly taking my father, often at the end of a long day to help people whom she knew who were in trouble, her great cry to my father was "aren't you going to do something or are you just going to another service?"

Also, in their last years, parents retired to a cottage that had belonged to my mother's grandmother in the village of Willersey in the Cotswolds. And this village so much part of my mother's heritage has such a kind and caring community which profoundly influenced my father in his last years.