

Tonight, as we gather to remember our loved ones before God, we are painfully reminded by the sense of loss we feel in their absence. Though time has passed, the sense of *loss* is still present and unavoidable, because we know those whom we love can *never* be replaced.

So tonight, we remember them, but more foundationally, we affirm that they are *remembered by God*. Remembered– not as a stale recollection of who they *were*, but *re-membered*– as part of the ongoing, living story, of who they truly are made to be in Jesus Christ. For in Christ, we see that death is not the end of the story of creation and so it is not the end of *our* story, nor the story of those we love. In the risen Jesus, we see the first fruits and renewal of creation, the promise of the new heaven and new earth.

In this requiem mass– sharing bread and wine together “in remembrance of Him”– we remember our loved ones as part of this bigger story. This story of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, through which we are assured God has eternally bound himself to his creation, even beyond death itself.

Those whom we have lost can never be replaced, because in Jesus nothing is truly lost. For in him, all are found, gathered, and re-membered with the communion of saints into an everlasting home.

Amen.