

# 1965 Tribute by Robert Kennedy Read at Funeral of His Father

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BROOKLINE, Mass., Nov. 20 — Joseph Patrick Kennedy, the man who fathered and shaped famous sons and survived all but one of them, was buried here today at the age of 81.

His funeral service at Hyanis, Mass., in the beautiful little Church of St. Francis Xavier where the Kennedys have wor-

broke occasionally as he paid tribute to Ann Gargan, the dead man's niece and constant companion in his final years following a stroke in 1961, and as he read a eulogy to his father written in 1965 by his brother Robert. Today would have been Robert's 44th birthday.

*The text of Kennedy tribute appears on Page 39.*

shipped for almost 40 years, was private. It stood in quiet contrast to the great state ceremonies that followed the assassinations of his sons, President John F. Kennedy and Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

The only adult member of the congregation to speak was Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts. His voice

Of his father, Robert wrote then:

"He has called on the best that was best in us. There was no such thing as half-trying. Whether it was running a race or catching a football, competing in school—we were to try. And we were to try harder than anyone else. We might not be the best, and none of us were, but we were to make the effort to be the best. 'After you've

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# Tribute by Robert Kennedy Read at Father's Rites

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done the best you can,' he used to say, 'the hell with it.'"

Only 70 persons were at the service today—more than half of them members of the immediate family. The rest were personal and political friends and retainers.

Above all, there was the presence of Joseph Kennedy's grandchildren. No fewer than 18 of them, out of 27 living children born to his sons and daughters, participated in the mass as altar boys, honorary pallbearers or as readers of prayers or from the Bible.

President Kennedy's only son, John, who will be 9 years old next Tuesday, stood at stiff attention near the altar and repeated by heart the 23d Psalm, beginning, in his strong young voice, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want . . ."

Some in the congregation wept, including Morton Downey, the singer, who had known Mr. Kennedy since 1923 and was one of his closest friends. Today, in the choir loft, he sang César Franck's "Panis Angelicus."

Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston, another old friend, celebrated the mass and delivered his own eulogy to a man he described as "speechless and severely crippled" for the last eight years.

"Even when the tragic news of the assassination of his son, the 35th President of the United States, and the assassination of Senator Robert Kennedy was announced, his courage never faltered," the Cardinal said in his high, harsh, ringing voice.

"Although unable to express his innermost thoughts, he carried that heavy cross, despite his own infirmity, with dignity, propriety and vitality."

The adults who listened to the Cardinal, massed in front pews on the right of the nave, included virtually every close relative by marriage or blood:

Joseph Kennedy's widow, Rose, mother of his nine children; Senator Edward Kennedy's wife, Joan; Senator Robert Kennedy's widow, Ethel; Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her husband, Sargent Shriver, Ambassador to France; Jean Kennedy

Smith and her husband, Stephen; Pat Kennedy Lawford, Ann Gargan and Mrs. Aristotle Onassis, widow of President Kennedy.

Most of the women wore black lace mantillas over their hair; Mrs. Joseph Kennedy, in addition, was veiled in black.

## Widow Writes Essay

Mrs. Kennedy had written an essay, which was read at the service by her son Edward. It said:

"The depths of my thanks to him I cannot adequately express, but I should like to repeat to you what I had often said in prayer in the middle of the night as well as in the middle of the day:

"I thank Thee, oh, my God with all my heart for all Thou hast done for me. I thank Thee, especially, for my husband who with Your help has made possible so many joys and such great happiness in my life. Bless him, dear God, and love him always and lead to eternal life."

The Kennedy grandchildren, including 11-year-old Caroline, daughter of the former President—wearing a small bandage on her forehead following a fall from a horse—sat on the left of the nave when they were not taking part in the service.

The coppery metal coffin of the family's patriarch, bare of flowers, rested in the aisle between the two groups. It faced the high altar, a vaulted structure supported on columns and decorated with a simple carved crucifix and painted panels depicting England's St. George and France's Joan of Arc.

It was given to the church by Joseph Kennedy and his wife after their oldest son, Joseph Patrick Jr., had been killed in action in a Navy plane over the English Channel in World War II.

The personal character of the funeral could be felt even in the choir loft, where 0 students and novice nuns from the Newton College of the Sacred Heart lifted up their girlish voices in more than half a dozen hymns.

The organist was Sister Aileen Cohalan, who has known the Kennedy family for decades. The choir director was Sister Elizabeth White, who went to school with Kathleen Kennedy, Joseph's oldest daughter, who

dies in a plane crash in the 1940's.

## Cooke at Service

The mass asked for by the Kennedy family today was a "white mass," in which the celebrating clergy wore white vestments to signify joy. Terence Cardinal Cooke of New York sat near the altar but did not participate.

The service began with Cardinal Cushing moving down the aisle under his white, pointed miter hat, intoning the words of the "de Profundis" at the coffin that rested before the door: "Out of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord . . . O Lord, hear my voice."

Bearing the crucifix before him was the tall figure of Robert Kennedy's 15-year-old son and namesake, clad in the robes of an altar boy. When the coffin was brought forward nearer the altar, Senator Edward Kennedy moved to the lectern. He began:

"This is not so much a final prayer to Dad as a reminder to those of us he left behind of his deep love for us and our obligation and responsibility to lead the kind of lives he would want us to lead."

His voice trembled as he thanked Miss Gargan for the

"love and affection she gave Dad."

Then he read his brother's eulogy, from a collection of 100 essays written about Joseph Kennedy by family and friends and privately printed in a book called "The Fruitful Bough."

It was also then that he read the prayer written for the same book by his mother.

The service took place today as rain drove down on Hyannis. But, as the cortege drove 75 miles north for the burial in Brookline's Holy Rood Cemetery, the skies cleared.

Joseph Kennedy was buried on a sloping lawn near the house where he and his bride began married life and his son John was born.

The stark, gray granite tombstone has simply the word "Kennedy" carved on it. The family clustered around the grave, but as Cardinal Cushing spoke the last rites, the wind snatched away his words. Only the Lord's Prayer could be clearly heard.

The ceremony lasted barely two minutes. Then, as the family left, Cardinal Cushing, a frail man 74 years old, knelt by the coffin to say another goodbye to another Kennedy.