

On Eric Talley's Funeral

I am so proud of our parishioners. The way you stepped up and did all in your power to help with Officer Talley's funeral makes my heart swell with pride. A gentleman from Eric's side of the family, who is not Catholic, put his hand on my shoulder and asked, "Was that choir from your parish?" I said yes, and he continued "Well I'm not Catholic, so I didn't know what was going on, but their singing did much to heal my heart. Tell them thank you for me." How kind of him!

And how kind the ushers were – so competent, attentive, respectful, and helpful in a dozen ways.

And the altar boys. I'm so proud of our lads. They work so hard to serve well. Their dedication and the selflessness of their parents who drive them to the practices and to the funeral is such a boon to our parish.

And all of you who came to pay your respects to the Rosary and viewing – your devotion was unfeigned, warm and natural.

And the excellent ladies of the Altar and Rosary Society; attending to every little detail so that the Talley's would feel welcome and supported by the parish. You really stepped up.

And so many of you asked, "What can we do? Do the Talley's need anything?" I know that anything they need from the parish will be immediately forthcoming.

And how proud I am of my assistants! They worked so hard, and divided up the work that needs to be done on a quotidian basis. They are such a blessing to me.

And the temporary kneelers at the Cathedral which are not very good gave us some worry, but some men in the parish built some excellent kneelers in no time, had them here in good time, and loaded them in my pickup for me to drive down to the Cathedral.

I must mention Fr. Robinson of the Society of St. Pius X at St. Isidore's. The Talley's used to attend St. Isidore's, and as we do not have a matching solemn set of black vestments, he graciously allowed us to use the vestments of St. Isidore's. God bless him and St. Isidore's.

Meeting so many police officers before and after the funeral, and before and after the memorial made my heart swell with gratitude and patriotism. I felt powerful old stirrings like those which moved me to serve in the military long ago. I want to be a cop! But that is not God's will. We each serve in our own way.

I also met two permanent deacons of the Archdiocese who were very, very supportive and helpful. They are both police officers; one of them put on his clerics and sat with Fr. Nolan on the Flatirons stage. After that, they took us to dinner and we ate Italian with tall glasses of beer and spoke of many good things, and had some good laughs. It was just what the doctor ordered. What splendid men these officers were – what good deacons.

Several have asked what the sermon was that I quoted from at the Requiem about the Agony in the Garden. It is Discourse # 16, by Cardinal Newman, entitled called *Mental Sufferings of Our Lord in His*

Passion. You can find it online at: <https://newmanreader.org/works/discourses/discourse16.html>. I read it at the beginning of each Lent. There is no other sermon like it that I know of.

A poem which was read at the memorial service for Officer Talley could serve as something we could pray for all those who stand on the thin blue line. It was written by the Talley children on Christmas of 2019. It's called *Our Unsung Hero*, which was read at the memorial service.

Dad, our unsung hero,
You never count the cost.
Whatever we need is never too much,
But our praises have not been enough.

Dad, our unsung hero,
You daily risk your life at work
To guard and care for the welfare of the needy.
Oh, our praises could never be enough.

Dad, our unsung hero,
Who provides so well for us,
We've not realized all you do for us.
Our praises have not been enough.

Dad, our unsung hero,
Who guards and guides our way,
We love you, and we thank you
On this Christmas Day.

May the Angels watch over you
And guard you on your way.
May God Bless and protect you
And bring you home each day.

I must tell you of something else. Traditionally, all the consecrated chrism that is left over from the previous year is poured into the grave of the last priest or deacon who has died. But the archbishop ordered the chrism to be poured into Eric's grave. This is a great honor for a layman, and we were deeply moved when we heard he had done this. That gesture and his presence in the sanctuary for the funeral were superb acts of kindness on his part.

When the coffin was slowly lowered into the ground after the prayers, you could smell the chrism coming up. Each of us was given a red rose to place on the coffin before we left the beautiful cemetery at Sacred Heart of Mary parish in Boulder. The pastor came out to be with us, and the altar boys of the parish really knew what they were doing.

Two violinists began to play Ave Maria as we filed away. I turned to look at the last ones by the grave, who were officers of the Boulder P.D. They were broken hearted, but so dignified, so respectful, as one by one they said their goodbyes. Seeing their sorrow was when I could no longer hold my tears back. I could barely get out the words, "I'm sorry for your loss."

Eternal rest grant unto him O lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.