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Adelaide farewells the Queen at St Peterâ??s Cathedral

St Peterâ??s Cathedral hosed a state service to commemorate the life of Queen Elizabeth II this evening, Tuesday 20 September, at St Peterâ??s Cathedral, which was attended by the Governor, the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Premier Peter Malinauskas with more than 450 members of the public.

The following is the address by the Archbishop of Adelaide, the Most Reverend Geoff Smith in which he pointed out the Queen had worshipped four times in St Peterâ??s, including in 1963, above, where she is pictured with Bishop Bryan Robin entering the cathedral with a guard of honour of CEBS members.

A packed Cathedral to honour the life of Queen Elizabeth II

It is a great pleasure to add my welcome to this thanksgiving service for Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I want to thank the Dean of the Cathedral, Bishop Chris McLeod and the cathedral staff, for the arrangements for this eveningâ??s service, and the cathedral choir for assisting us in our worship.

As we gather this evening, we come to do a number of things.

First, we come to acknowledge, to pay our respects to her late majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Even though she was based in England, she was our Queen and she served faithfully for more than seventy years. She visited South Australia seven times and worshipped in this Cathedral on four occasions.

There were many crises at home and abroad during her seventy-year reign, and many personal challenges, yet through it all she carried out her duty faithfully and well, without ego, serving right to the

end of her long life.

Uncle Major Moogy Sumner, Ngarrindjeri Kaurna Elder offered the Welcome to Country and a smoking ceremony invoking all our ancestors to greet Her Majesty as she joins them

Upon hearing of the death of her father, King George VI, the young Queen spoke bravely from South Africa in the midst of her sadness and said: â??I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belongâ?•.

The imperial family has certainly changed since 1952, but today we celebrate the fact that her majesty fulfilled that vow in a joyful, faithful and generous way, undertaking more than 21,000 engagements during her reign, with the last two engagements just days before her death.

The second thing we come to do is express our sadness at her death. While we all knew she was growing older and more frail, her late majestyâ??s quite sudden death, I think, caught us by surprise. Many will feel sad that she is no longer our Queen.

As she grew older her late majesty became more like our grandmother or great-grandmother and we will miss that rock, that familiar and unchanging part of our lives. For most of us Queen Elizabeth II is the only monarch we have known. Her photograph was in schools, halls and community clubs all around the country, and her silhouette on stamps, coins and bank notes. Many of us grew up singing God save our gracious Queen at school every morning.

The Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC and the Premier Peter Peter Malinauskas were among the dignitaries attending.

I have to say I found it quite jarring to hear â??God save the Kingâ?• at the proclamation of King Charles III accession at North Terrace just over a week ago. Queen Elizabeth might have lived a long way away, but she was always there, part of the life of our nation and state, in an uncertain time a rock of certainty and stability, and we will miss her.

The third thing we come to do is thank God for the life and service of Queen Elizabeth II.

In her first Christmas address in December 1952, Queen Elizabeth II, as she looked forward to her coronation in six monthâ??s time said this: â??I want to ask you all, whatever your religion may be, to pray for me on that day â?? to pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you, all the days of my lifeâ??.

Today we gather both inside and outside the Cathedral to thank God for answering those prayers, and to give thanks to God for the life and service of the Queen. When King George VI died, the proclamation of Queen Elizabethâ??s accession to the throne included these words: â??That the High and Mighty Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary is now, by the death of our late Sovereign of happy memory, become Queen Elizabeth II by the Grace of Godâ?•.

Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC read the first lesson

A significant phrase in the proclamation is: â??by the grace of Godâ??. The understanding of the authors of the proclamation is that the monarch reigned with the permission of God the ultimate ruler of the heavens and the earth, as an expression of Godâ??s love for all creation.

Thatâ??s what â??graceâ?? means. Grace is undeserved love or favour. The words of the proclamation of the new Queen in 1952 had as their foundation the understanding that she reigned under the reign of God, and that her reign was a gift of love from God. Her reign was part of Godâ??s good and loving plan for the good order and flourishing of the world.

A marquee outside sheltered the overflow congregation from a rainy evening.

So today we thank God for Godâ??s love expressed in the life and service of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. We thank God for the gift of Elizabeth, for her faithfulness to her people and her devotion to her role that she saw as a life-long vocation from God. We thank God for giving Queen Elizabeth the strength she needed for what was a very difficult task.

The fourth thing we do this evening is to commend Queen Elizabeth to the mercy and love of God, and we can do that with confidence because of Godâ??s love for her, and her response of trust and faith in God.

The Christian faith of her late majesty was absolutely clear. In her Christmas message of 2000, the Queen said: â??To many of us our beliefs are of fundamental importance. For me the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God, provide a framework in which I try to lead my

lifeâ??.

The Premier, Peter Malinauskas, read the Second Lesson from the Revelation of St John the Divine

And last Christmas in her message the Queen said this of Jesus: â??a man whose teachings have been handed down from generation to generation and have been the bedrock of my faithâ?•.

Itâ??s important to remember that the faithful service for which we are so thankful and the character which we admire had its foundation and basis in the Christian faith of the Queen. That faith was the motivation for and framework of her life.

Her Majesty was not perfect as none of us is perfect, but ultimately itâ??s not our perfection that counts. The Christian faith says what counts is what God has done for us in the death and resurrection

of Jesus Christ. There is found forgiveness and relationship with God now and forever. Our response to Godâ??s love is to trust in Jesusâ?? death and resurrection. Her late Majesty did that through her life, and so, we can be confident that she now rests in peace and will rise in glory to eternal life.

Pipers from the City of Adelaide Pipe Band played* Highland Cathedral *in honour of Her Majesty

The fifth thing we do this evening is to pray for King Charles and his family in their grief. It must be very tough having to grieve in public as the royal family have had to do over the past 10 days. Every action, every step, every word or even look scrutinized without mercy. The funeral is over now but the sadness and loss will continue. We pray for them and for Godâ??s peace for their lives.

At the end of tonightâ??s service we will sing part of a very well-known hymn and its words include â??God save the King!â?? Those words are a reminder to us to pray for King Charles III.

The Premier, Peter Peter Malinauskas, joins the choir on the steps after the service

I doubt anyone would want the job he has now inherited. Following his enormously popular mother will not be easy and yet his success is important for us all, so we do pray Godâ??s blessing for our King, Charles III. May his reign be marked by faithfulness, wisdom, grace and peace.

Queen Elizabeth II has given great service as our Queen, and we celebrate that gift. As we remember her and reflect on her life, may we do more than just receive the gift. May we be encouraged to follow her example of selfless service for the good of others, strengthened and guided by God who loves us all.

Amen.

Archbishop Geoff offers a blessing as the Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, prepares to leave.

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