

GAS Letter for January 2021 Intercession Paper

Dear Fellow Members of the Guild:

My letter in the January Intercession Paper normally begins with my thanks, usually fulsome and deserved, to our hosts in November. Our Annual Requiem was scheduled to be at my own Church, the Guild's National Shrine, and so it was. It was, however, unlike any Annual Requiem in our lifetimes. The shadow of the public health crisis was cast over the proceedings, and it was quite rightly decided that no Council Members would undertake such a journey under these circumstances. Given the miracles of modern technology (let us leave the curses aside for a moment), we conducted the Guild's Council Meeting electronically on Friday evening, 13 November. All Council Members whose terms expired were re-elected, as were the Officers, and the Guild Council conducted what business it had before it. This has happened four times in the last century: during the Spanish Influenza in 1918 and 1919, and twice during the War in 1943 and 1944, owing to the rationing of petrol, tyres and railway use. On these occasions, of course, the business was transacted by postal ballot.

We did go forward with the Annual Requiem and with the new video system at the National Shrine, it was possible both for Council Members and the membership at large to take part in the Mass in this limited way, by video. Though this method of hearing Mass cannot be compared to the real thing, and cannot provide for receiving Holy Communion, it is certainly a very worthy activity and we were grateful to be able to offer this. It may well be that this was the largest attendance at an annual Requiem for many years, as a result of the ease of attending for people. I can certainly without fear of reproach thank the professional Church of the Resurrection choir under the direction of Maestro David Enlow, who is also a Guild Council member, and Resurrection's Organist and Choir Master, who offered Giovanni Anerio's Requiem. It was necessary for your humble servant to preach at the Mass, as I was the only priest present! I hope that many of you were able to watch this broadcast, and if you did not do so live, it can be seen at any time on Resurrection's Facebook, Vimeo and YouTube archives. Since it is not attached to a feast, there is no fear of it becoming stale! If you have not yet seen it, please look for it on the Church of the Resurrection's broadcast networks: Facebook, YouTube and Vimeo. There will also be links to it on the Guild's website, www.guildofallsouls.net

Rather than attach anything theological to this letter this time, I am printing my sermon of the Feast of Christ the King this year, which attempts to draw conclusions about Christ as King of All Saints, King of All Souls, King of this world and the next.

Yours in the Holy Souls,

The Reverend Canon Barry E. B. Swain, SSC
Superior-General

T. E. Smith, Secretary-General of the Guild of All Souls 1898-1941

(This first is an extract from Dr Mark Wuonola's 1991 history of the Guild of All Souls' American Branch, which is still available.)

“Father Franklin Joiner (Rector of S. Clement's Philadelphia 1920-1955, and Superior-General of the Guild of All Souls 1925-1958) wrote, ‘My earthly ideal of the priesthood has always been the late Father Larrabee, sometime Rector of the Church of the Ascension in Chicago, and Dean of Nashotah House during my residence there from the Autumn of 1915 until the early summer of 1918. When Father Larrabee died, I was chosen to be the Superior-General of the Guild of All Souls in this country, an office which he had held with distinction for many years. To me it was a greater honour to be Father Larrabee's successor than it was to head the Guild. At this time, T. E. Smith was Secretary of the Guild, and during his lifetime my office was purely nominal, but since Mr Smith's death the full responsibility of the Guild of All Souls has rested upon me, and its work has now come to be associated with ‘2013 Apple Tree Street’ (S. Clement's Clergy House). In the work of the Guild, I have the able assistance of Miss Marian Thompson, a member of the parish, and I am pleased to say that the Guild continues to grow and flourish.’ ”

“It was noted in the chapter on the Foundation of the Guild in England that the foundation and work of the Guild there has been very much an achievement of the laity. Many examples of this same lay dedication abound in the work of the Guild in America, but none is so great as the example of T. E. Smith. He was truly one of the stalwarts of the Catholic Movement as well as of the Guild’s particular work during his life. Father Joiner referred to him as “the Guild’s most notable member”.

“The Rev’d Leslie J. A. Lang, writing in 1988, recalled T. E. Smith, whom he first met in about 1926. Mr Smith had motored over to Bard College in a chauffeur-driven car, from his home on the west bank of the Hudson, near Kingston, where he was a member of Holy Cross Church, of which Father Mabry was Rector. Although “T. E.” was well-to-do at that time, he apparently lost everything in the Depression and moved to Brooklyn, living in an apartment in a large old house and holding a modest job in a law office. Mr Smith had a son, T. E. Junior, from his first marriage. After his first wife’s death he married her niece, Lillian, by whom he had another son, Duane, named after his ancestor for whom Duane Street in New York is named. Oddly, Father Mabry came to St Paul’s, Brooklyn, about the time T. E. Smith moved there. Father Lang knew him during the years 1931-1934, while he was at General Seminary, and then as Deacon, at St Paul’s. He wrote, ‘T.E. knew by name and reputation, or had met, almost everybody connected with the Catholic Movement of his time. He never forgot anything and also knew everything, in every detail, especially in the American Church. In that sense, he never grew old, mentally. He was pleasant, kind, gentlemanly, talkative, inquisitive, and sometimes just a little boring, if you weren’t a keen Anglo-Catholic of the St Paul’s Brooklyn – Saint Clement’s Philadelphia – St Mary the Virgin company. In those days, we fresh seminarians had names for all the eccentrics – “Hail Mary Drysdale”, “Pray for us Morris”, and “Purgatory Smith”. T. E. was one of those who made the movement exciting and colourful...’ ”(Father Lang died in 1990, having been Rector of St Edward the Martyr and of Intercession in New York, and St Peter’s Westchester Square in the Bronx, and a long-time honorary assistant at the end of his life at St Thomas’ Fifth Avenue.)

“T. E. Smith can rightly be regarded as the model of the Catholic layman, for he was in the world but not of the world. Although he held a secular job, and was no stranger to adversity – the Depression and the Death of his first wife of Spanish Influenza in the epidemic of 1918 – he always continued his work for the church and the Guild.”

What follows is from Father Mabry’s article of 1942 regarding T. E. Smith’s death, which is truly moving:

“As was his unfailing custom, Mr Smith made his monthly confession on the Eve of All Saints. He then went home to help prepare a special Hallowe’en party for poor children with his neighbours. The next morning he received the Blessed Sacrament, which was to be his Viaticum, at Solemn Mass at seven o’clock. That evening, I spoke with him over the telephone about some arrangements for All Souls Day, and found him looking forward to it with great enthusiasm which, because it fell on Sunday this year (1941) was to be transferred as always to Monday. He arrived on Sunday morning to make his usual semi-weekly Communion. As he was prostrating himself before the Eucharistic Presence of Him whom he had so long and lovingly adored and for whom he had so faithfully labored, his soul took flight from the body. He died instantly. You see he had made his Confession, he had received his Viaticum the day before, he was prepared to receive Holy Communion that morning and he was genuflecting, which certainly meant that his last

thought was of Our Lord. He died as he had lived! What a glorious death! Who could wish for more? (He died on Sunday, 2 November 1941; on 5 November Father Joiner sang the Burial Requiem for Mr Smith, with Father Mabry as Deacon of the Mass.)”

“His body was immediately laid in St Michael’s Chapel at St Paul’s, and there it remained through the remaining Sunday Masses and the many Masses on All Souls’ Day. After the last Mass that day, we had it placed on the Catafalque before the High Altar, to rest there during the Low Masses the next morning. I am happy to say that his family and I maintained the same dignity for him in his death that he had always cultivated during his life. There were no sentimental flowers, nor corpse-gazing, and finally the burial that Holy Church intends for her own, the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Absolution at the Catafalque. A life of great fidelity and a glorious death! I thank God I have been privileged to witness both.”