

The whole world will be watching the funeral of Queen Elizabeth. Many will be enjoying the atmosphere and the aesthetic appeal of the event.

For many it will be an experience of ritual beyond what they normally encounter.

As Catholics we are familiar with the Liturgy of the Mass and other events, and we know that these occasions can raise us to higher thoughts and emotions.

Then there are the buildings where these ceremonies take place, which are sometimes magnificent churches with the added benefit of sacred music and art.

These things are not ends in themselves, but rather the means to move us to praise God in His greatness, and to be inspired by hope of better things.

We will be reminded that there are realities beyond our normal routines and - in the case of sacraments and the Mass - we directly enter these mysteries.

It is also a help when there are large numbers of people praying at the same time, as this can inspire us to unity of purpose and endeavour. We know how to pray alone, but it is helpful to be lifted by the faith of others around us.

We believe that in our sacred liturgy we are joining with the eternal liturgy in Heaven, where the angels proclaim without ceasing the glory of God. *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus...*

At funerals we take the chance to add our own prayers for the salvation of all the faithful departed; and for the spiritual wellbeing of all who still have time to complete in this life.

The Legion is always encouraging people to search out the spiritual dimension of their lives, which can be found in two thousand years of revelation, accessible to all.

We do not stop at the external rituals but seek the interior transformation to holiness of life that is so essential if we are to understand this earthly life.

The big events such as the funeral of the Queen might be an occasion for many to reflect more deeply on the themes of life and death, this life and the next.

It is one of those occasions when people will generally try a little harder to be kind to each other, and that can lead to other fruits.

For the Legion we operate every day of the year, big occasion or not, to make known the way of Christ.

We prepare for the eternal Day to which all people are invited in mercy and helped to attain through grace.