



Fr. Joseph Matlak

# Queen Elizabeth II: A Eulogy

*The following eulogy was given following a solemn Requiem Mass for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Taylors, South Carolina, on September 23, 2022.*

On September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of Saint Mary, my native country of England—known by its consecration as the “Dowry of Mary”—bade farewell in this earthly life to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Not only England, but the entire world stopped and pondered as she, our longest reigning monarch, prepared to meet the Creator and Savior in whom she pledged her lifelong faith and devotion. It is perhaps difficult for those who live elsewhere to understand why the departure of this icon of our people, who reigned as monarch since her coronation in 1952, and whose reign spanned almost a third of the existence of the United States of America, should be so monumental. It may be particularly troubling for Catholics, who have suffered so much in England, to understand why she, or her affairs, should be of much significance to them.

I, as someone who was born and raised in that rapidly secularizing and apostatizing country, can attest that the continued presence of the Christian faith therein is due to the steadfast example of such as she.

Each Easter and Christmas, our “green and pleasant” land, which the poem of William Blake described as the place in which the Holy Lamb of God was seen, and among the “dark, satanic mills” of which Jerusalem was “buildd”, looked forward to a televised address that reminded us of the reason for the season. As so many of her subjects turned their backs on the faith of

our fathers, she, whose earthly rule was but a representation of the divine rule, recalled the continued presence of the divine among us. She once apparently expressed an ear-

for us a true defender of the Christian faith. Her tireless witness to the faith continued even after her death, when the entire world witnessed what is sure to be the most magnificent funeral of their lifetimes, the ceremonial and liturgy of which are a sharp contrast to many contemporary liturgical expressions, including within the Catholic Church. I wondered whether it could indeed have been her final message to us, namely, that ancient rituals help us to remember from whence we emanate, and that traditions are handed down to us precisely so that the reign of Christ might take firm root in our world.

Thus, we gather this evening in order to contemplate the great equalizer of kings and paupers—death—and to pray for the repose of her soul. We do so in a manner in which I am sure she would have very much appreciated. As for me, I will say “thank you, ma’am” for reminding our “green and pleasant” land of its Christian dignity. Finally, I commend her to the intercession of Our Lady of Walsingham, whose shrine is a sacred place of pilgrimage in which England was once declared to be her dowry, and whose feast day is tomorrow, that her descendants never forget those Christian values of faith and self-sacrifice that she held most dear.



nest desire to live until the Second Coming, in order to remove her crown and place it at the feet of the King of Kings.

In stark contrast to her infelicitous royal predecessor of six wives, who was granted the title of *fidei defensor*, but who, enveloped in the hubris of sin, removed himself from the fullness of communion with the Apostolic See, Queen Elizabeth became

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