

Rev Gerry Booker

27th December 1930- 10th September 2019

This is the substance of the Address at Woollensbrook Crematorium given by the Revd Doug Loveridge prior to the Thanksgiving Service. 27 September 2019

I felt a sense of honour that Gerry asked that I should lead this ceremony, and it was a privilege to be able to offer some personal recollections of him. He came to a service here a short while ago which he had asked me to lead for an old friend, and I seem to have passed the test.

These words were added to later at the Memorial Service lead by my wife, Canon Jo Loveridge, who also lives next door to Gerry and Renee's house. Jo had the Gerry Blessing also, in that when we came to the parish Gerry was not at all keen on Women Priests. But he was an open-minded man and rapidly came round to working with Jo. They don't all do that!

Gerry loved music, and was frequently at Soundbites, where he and Renee would help regularly. He really enjoyed the traditional classical music, and occasionally one might hear a gentle murmur if something too contemporary had been played. Or he might have been unfortunately unavailable.

I am still not sure what he thought of the time I brought Renee out at a parish party to sing Elvis' "I can't help falling in love with you" with me; he was able to keep quiet counsel when needed.

One day Gerry called to say that all the lights had gone out. Ours were fine next door, but his electricity was not working – and Renee was out at an important commitment which she could not leave. He was not worried but bemused, and we tried to find out what the problem was; it turned out to be underground in the road. However, I invited Gerry to come next door, and we had a long conversation about the things that mattered to us and our concerns.

It was very unusual, just the two of us, and it brought home to me what a delightful man he was. In fact I would say that he is the man for whom the word "genial" was invented. It

was always a pleasure to meet him. He always had great stories – and jokes! And after our conversation we turned on the television as there was a match on, and Gerry loved sport.



Gerry was a Christian and a priest, and his faith shone out.

As a priest in our parish his way of leading worship was gentle and profound, and when he read the Scriptures – as he did most memorably at Nine Lessons and Carols and other major services – his way of putting the words over was full of integrity, perhaps blending his priesthood with skills from his teaching career.

As a Christian, Gerry was absolutely convinced of the reality of God's presence in his life and in our world, and he believed and trusted absolutely in the wonder of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the faith which all Christians share, and which we commend to everyone, but for Gerry it meant that he knew he was saved and as the end approached he knew where he was going: to a greater place, to heaven, to be with God forever.

He would tell us that this is through what God has done for us in Christ, and that "Nothing at all can separate us from that love", a love which he sought to flow through his life.

No wonder we can say of Gerry, with full assurance, that "All is Well".