



WINCHESTER
COLLEGE

Address on the Death of Queen Elizabeth No Man is an Island: Our Place, Our Queen, Our Future

Our Place

We gather in War Cloister to mark the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second. Last summer in Meads we celebrated her remarkable reign of 70 years. Her Majesty's message of thanks still remains on an otherwise bare Flint Court Notice Board.

The time may be out of joint. But history, purpose and place cohere. Winchester College was founded by one man devoted to the monarchy. His College is historically based on his concept of service. This special Cloister is dedicated to those who passed their lives in such service, and its iconography celebrates the wider context of that Commonwealth which a Queen cherished so proudly.

Our Queen

No man is an island. Perhaps so. Yet this remarkable woman developed and delighted in an island identity. She represented an island, constituted an island – *our island* – its character, our essence. She gave us context. She called us to. and maintained us in, an idea of our meaningful selves.

Few knew the Queen. But, here and everywhere, many feel that they knew her. And we all hold in honour and admiration the national virtues which she exemplified: a woman of inner discipline but radiant personality, of exemplary standards yet depth of compassion, adaptation to circumstance yet constancy of principle, of dutiful service, like that of Ruth, which never showed the weariness it must sometimes have entailed.

Our Future

We live in times of change: new climate, new monarch, new leader, new age. The example of Queen Elizabeth now takes its place in our country's history. Easy rest the head which wore our nation's crown.

In another funeral sermon preached on the death of James I, John Donne explains that God loves a man *in fine*, at his end. But this love is also *in finem*, to the end, to eternity. The Queen was head of our national church and a deep believer in its traditions of faith. The dead and we are now all in one church, Donne tells us, and at the resurrection shall be all in one Quire.

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The Queen is dead: Long Live the King. Today in this special place, remembering our remarkable Queen, let us determine on an even better future inspired by one glorious past.