

On behalf of Fr Dennis' family and friends, and the Parish Council, I would like to thank you all for being here with us this evening to welcome him back into his beloved church one last time.

A special thank you to friends who have travelled to be here this evening, to Canon Bowdren and the Priests of the Nottingham Diocese and to Sister Eileen and the Presentation Sisters.

Thank you to people from the community of Buxton and a very special thank you to Fr Dennis' parishioners for everything you have done and are doing, in thanksgiving for the special part he played in our lives.

Over the last few days, as we have been preparing to celebrate Fr Dennis' life, many thoughts and memories have come to mind of a man who shared so much with us; indeed, you can see a few of those memories displayed around the Church this evening.

We all have our own special memories, but perhaps there is no better way to reflect on Fr Dennis' life, than to look and consider the Christian symbols that were placed on his coffin earlier.

HIS CHALICE

We placed his chalice. This is made from Waterford Crystal and was a gift from his friends; a sign of his priestly ministry. We were privileged to celebrate Eucharist with Fr. Dennis here in Buxton over the last 30 years.

HIS STOLE

We placed his stole. This is a liturgical vestment. It is always worn for the celebration of sacraments and sacramentals. Fr. Dennis received his stole at his ordination, in Nottingham, on 5th July 1972.

HIS BIBLE

We placed his Bible. The Bible is a collection of 73 books. It offers us scripture and sacred texts. We all know Fr. Dennis' love of scripture; we remember his words, "We break the word, before we break the bread". As he shared scripture with us, he challenged us to read and reflect on the scriptures and incorporate them into our daily life and in doing so, to build the Kingdom of God here on earth today.

HIS CRUCIFIX

And we placed his crucifix. The crucifix is a symbol of our beliefs. The open arms of Christ gladly welcome us as He receives us into his presence.

We are blessed that Fr Dennis was a part of our lives.