

In a world that puts a great deal of store on status, we often judge people by the house they live in, the car they drive or even, when they die, by the numbers who turn out for their funeral.

When Bardis contacted me the other day about Leonard's funeral I started asking a few people did they know Leonard Harvey. Several people said 'No' and then Alistair McMillen came up to me and said, 'I remember Leonard Harvey. He was a watch maker.' Then over a cup of tea in his house I heard of him growing up in this area, the watches Alistair had got from him, his work as a technician for Rolex watches. These memories of Alistair's, along with what his niece Bardis told me, began to paint a picture of Leonard Harvey, a quiet, private man, who grew up with his sister Rita and lived around here until moving into sheltered accommodation in Glenageary. His niece Bardis had watched over him and looked after his affairs until his death just before Christmas.

The point I am coming to here is that, whatever value the world may place upon us, we have an inherent value as individuals. A value in the eyes of those we love and who love us. We each bring distinctive gifts to bear on this world in which we live. Leonard brought his skill as a watchmaker which no doubt gave him great satisfaction but also was prized by those who sought his help. We each have a value in the sight of God. We read in Matthew's Gospel:

<sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup> And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup> So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. *Matt 10:29-31*

For each one of us is made in God's image, each one of us carries something of the divine, each one of us is one for whom Christ died. Each one of us has a dignity before God.

So today we have brought Leonard Harvey back to Howth, to where he grew up. We will honour his final wish that he be cremated and his ashes interred in the grounds of this Church. We gather this morning to commend Leonard, our brother in Christ, brother, uncle, watchmaker, friend to the care of his heavenly Father. As we do so we set our own lives in the context of eternity, our hopes and our fears, in the context of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that he may watch over us and keep until the day of our own departure from this earth that we may rest in him as our hope is this our brother Leonard does.