



Archevêque de Montréal

Homily:

## GUY LAFLEUR'S NATIONAL FUNERAL

May 3, 2022

We are gathered here today because of Guy Lafleur. He was firmly rooted in his family; his passion was hockey; his role model was Jean Béliveau; his inspiration was the public; he set out to outdo himself consistently.

Since April 22, we all have been immersed in both sadness and gratitude: sadness at the loss of a loved one and gratitude for his life of generosity that radiated in every direction and touched so many lives.

To Guy's dear family: We are united with you in your pain and we want you to know how much Guy touched our personal, family and social life. We thank you for your own generosity and, through our presence – both in person and through the media – we convey our sympathy to you during this time of mourning and assure you of our support in thought and in prayer.

St. Paul tells us: “What do you have that you did not receive?” (1 Cor 4:7). Guy had received much, and his joy was to give in return and to share joy with fans and the general public. His humility made him a team player, always close to the people, accessible and attentive. He signed autographs gladly and shook hands unceasingly.

He was a great athlete; he made the game thrilling, playing every game as if it were his last, giving the best of himself, surpassing himself constantly. He was also a man of courage, particularly evident when he returned to the game after being away for a few years.

If in the rink he was a determined competitor, off the ice he was equally determined to say “yes” to support every good cause, especially those for underprivileged children. He knew how to go beyond himself in order to meet others on their terms.

This story of a heart that had beaten so much, never stopped. He was available, even in his illness, by showing solidarity with those who were ill. This love story between Guy, his family and the public is today at a point of transition. Our hearts — aching from the death of a spouse and a father, a son and a brother, a friend and a role model — thirst.

Our hearts thirst for memory — and innumerable stories of affection for Guy are being recalled. Our heart thirsts for presence — and we set aside our daily routine and our immediate commitments to allow ourselves to be gathered by Guy so as to accompany his family, to come together as one and pray for him.

Our hearts thirst for a future that is greater than ourselves, where the veil of mourning disappears, where death is transformed into a passage from this world to eternal life, and where homecomings replace loneliness and tears.

The prophet Isaiah tells us: “This is our God” (Is 25:9). He prepares for us the infinite and eternal Kingdom of Love: the Kingdom of Beauty and of Peace, of Truth and of Goodness. He prepares for us a dwelling place and a feast beyond anything we can imagine, a huge family celebration, where we are the children of God, where once again we will meet our loved ones and the rest of humanity.

Jesus tells us: “Do not let your hearts be troubled” (Jn 14:1). Human life is a gift that is both precious and limited, created to receive eternal life as a gift from God. Our thirst is a thirst for the absolute, and God is the Absolute who comes to us in Jesus Christ.

A humble surrender to God through death is the final act of surpassing oneself in this world, which one achieves by walking in the footsteps of Jesus, who died and is risen, the model par excellence who knocks at the door of our heart.

To Guy's dear family: We unite ourselves to your prayer. May God give you comfort and grace, may he inspire us to solidarity, and may he welcome Guy into his Mercy and Joy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Christian Lépine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

† Christian Lépine  
Archbishop of Montreal