

Cardinal Cushing (1964) On Kennedy and Mozart

Here are excerpts from the remarks by Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, at the Jan. 19, 1964, Mass held for the assassinated President:



A few words will not, I hope, intrude unduly on the solemnity of this occasion....

The day has a special meaning for all of us by the presence of our late, beloved President's wife, valiant Jacqueline, who has taken herself from her sorrow for a few hours to pray to God with us in sacrifice and song....

He and his dear Jacqueline enriched the White House with the best in art and culture and in music....

No tribute, therefore, my dearly beloved, to our departed President and his charming wife, could be more fitting than the spiritual, artistic, and the liturgical service of this morning....

No one will fail to note also the appropriateness of selecting Mozart's *Requiem*, sung by outstanding choral groups and accompanied by the world-famous Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of its able conductor [Erich Leinsdorf], for America's martyred President. The genius of art and the genius of leadership are joined together in this single event.

Separated by centuries, they were both touched by a creative instinct uncommon in any generation; both brought out of their youth a shining light which will illuminate the ages; both were summoned to eternity at a moment which to us mortals certainly seems untimely.

The President had hardly started on his most promising career to guard the country and the world for peace; Mozart died before he finished his *Requiem*. Yet the memory of men still enshrines both names among the great of this world. Today, in the unforgettable music of Mozart, we have heard again in our hearts the stirring voice of our once-youthful leader; in the artistic expression of Mozart we have caught the unmistakable accent of John F. Kennedy....