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## *Words for Rowland Radford*

**A homily by the Very Rev. Sam Candler  
at the Funeral of Rowland Radford**

We gather today to remember Rowland Radford, a true gentleman, a man of grace and care. A few minutes ago, we sang the hymn, "Love divine, all loves excelling," and that love certainly described Rowland. With his gallant character and steady faith, we might call him "Sir Rowland!"

All of us, today, bring stories of his presence and care. Each of us remembers, in our own way, his loyalty to family, his loyalty to his friends, and loyalty, of course, to his church. Thank you, Sir Rowland."

I, too, have lots of stories to remember. But I tell only one story today. It was about twenty years or so, ago, here in the Cathedral of St. Philip – the place Rowland was so devoted to. Times were tense back then, and there were particular controversies that were threatening to split the church. At least, some people were threatening to split the church.

Well, on one particular issue, I had taken a personal stand which was unpopular. Maybe that is putting it mildly. Times were tense and anxious. Sir Rowland, good old Rowland, my friend, was certainly not one of those people who might leave the church. But, he was one of the people who, at the time, may not have agreed with the stand I had taken.

That year, I, the dean of the Cathedral, had to choose who would be the new Senior Warden. I knew Rowland did not completely agree with everything that was going on in the church, and I asked him to be Senior Warden that year. He immediately and gracefully accepted. And the Church benefitted greatly!

Rowland accepted graciously, because Rowland Radford was a good and gracious person. That steady grace and devotion was in his bones and in his spirit. And his children and grandchildren, and their spouses, have the same character. As does the lovely Tish. That sort of spirit was built up in Rowland, and he passes it on to others.

It takes amazing strength to be gracious. Rowland had that strength.

Let me mention something else, while we are here in church. Rowland Radford was what we old-time Episcopalians often call a "churchman." He was a churchman. I don't mean simply that he went to church, though he did that faithfully.

I mean that he believed in the careful rituals and practices and devotions of what we call "high church," "high church practices," like frequent communion. He took communion seriously. He took ritual seriously. He knew that those meticulous devotions could bring together lots of people who otherwise had lots of different opinions.

Yes, Rowland enjoyed high church liturgy and its attention to detail. But that detail always influences the other pieces of one's life. Such attention to detail was one of Rowland's attributes in everything he did in life: being organized, being neat.

Well, Rowland knew that when we pay attention to keeping ourselves organized and neat, when we pay attention to keeping our prayers organized and neat, we end up paying attention to keeping ourselves right and neat with other people, too. Rowland loved people. Rowland enjoyed people with care, because Rowland enjoyed prayer with care. Rowland knew that when we enjoy prayer with care, we enjoy people with care.

Thank you, Sir Rowland, for your gentlemanly care and prayer. Thank you for your love of family and friends and God. You have shown the world the way to be faithful and full, even in hard and anxious times. You have been "love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down."

AMEN.

The Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler  
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip

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