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 In my time as a parish minister, I visited a lot of families where someone greatly loved had died.  Mostly you listen and people talk.  They tell the story of the last days and weeks - how it was and what was said.  Sometimes they talk about how things might have been otherwise - and you hope that these difficult things too can be laid to rest.

I was there again as I listened to the Princes William and Harry talking about the loss of Diana, their dearly-loved mother.  Sudden death is dreadful - private grief which is done in public particularly so.  The young child's loss of a parent is always there - painfully rekindled at all the stages of growing up.  Prince William regretted that Diana had not met his wife nor seen his children.  Nor indeed entered the later times of being a parent to adult children where the parent child relationship begins to reverse.

William and Harry showed great courage last night in their determination to fittingly honour their mother as we approach the 20th anniversary of her death next month**.**

I learned two things from what they said - maybe not particularly religious things but they belong in the area of what is holy**.**and what makes us human**.**

First, I thought about their distress that their last phone call with their mother was rushed.  That is completely understandable.  For children live mainly in the present tense.  Our old funeral service said, 'in the midst of life we are in death'.  And death is the ever-present reality of life.  Nobody would expect childrento think like that.  But my experience as a pastor is that many people carry family and relationship breakdowns, feuds and silences around with them - things we might regret not trying to mend while there is time.

And second I took comfort the fact that Diana was obviously a good parent.  She had problems - obviously so.  But taught her children to live fully in the moment, to enjoy and savour life, to be compassionate and involved and to build good relationships.

If that's the legacy it's a good one