

Life Is Changed, Not Ended
A Reflection and Prayer for Hope and Remembrance

I hope that when death comes by James Mooney

*I hope that when death comes, it embraces us gently,
like being carried to your bedroom as a child
after falling asleep on the couch during a lively family party.
And in that transition,
I hope we can still sense the echoes of laughter resonating from the next room,
reminding us of the love and joy that filled our journey.
And as the voices of the ones that are, fade.
The voices of those who once were, now echo in your ears.
And in that moment the hand of the soul you miss most will reach for you...
and whisper ...
You're home.
You are home...*

Reflection: Carried Home in Love

"Life is changed, not ended." These words from the funeral liturgy offer us a promise at the very heart of faith: death is not a final goodbye but a passage into the love of God.

James Mooney's tender poem imagines death as being carried to bed after falling asleep during a family gathering, the laughter still echoing in the next room. It's an image filled with trust and peace. We are not leaving the warmth of love; we are being carried deeper into it. The sounds of joy and affection that once filled our days do not disappear. They live on, resonating from the "next room," where those who have gone before us now dwell in God's eternal embrace. Their voices are not lost; they have simply become part of the great harmony of heaven.

When the poem whispers, *"You're home,"* it echoes the truth of our faith, that death is not an ending but a homecoming. In that moment, God's hand reaches out, gently drawing each soul into the fullness of love. Our grief remains real, but so does our hope. The promise of Christ assures us that love endures beyond all partings. Every life lived in faith continues, changed, yes, but never ended. And one day, when our own time comes, we too will be lifted gently, carried home through the doorway of peace, while the echoes of laughter and love still sound from the next room.

Loving and Eternal God,

You are the giver of life and the keeper of every soul.
When our hearts ache with loss, remind us of your promise
that life is changed, not ended,
and that love, once given, is never lost.
Carry our loved ones gently into your light,
as a parent carries a sleeping child home,
and let them awaken to the laughter and joy
that echo from the rooms of eternity.
Help us to feel their presence not in absence but in peace,
to trust that their journey continues in you,
and that one day we, too,
will hear your whisper calling us home.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

*"Life is changed, not ended." – Roman Missal, Preface for the Dead
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