

Thoughts from The Moderator after the service for HM The Queen in St Giles

The Moderator of the General Assembly, Rt Rev Dr Greenshields has given a homily in memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

Rt Rev Dr Greenshields spoke at a Service of Thanksgiving at St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh this afternoon.

King Charles III, the Queen Consort, members of the Royal Family, religious and political leaders including First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP and Prime Minister Liz Truss MP were in attendance.



Dr Greenshields said: "These last few days, as tributes to her Majesty have poured in and we have watched images of her on screen from her earliest years, capturing that remarkable

life, yet now beginning to sink in that she is gone from us – “gone home” to express her own words.

“Today, we gather in this place of worship and throughout the nation, to express our thanks to God, for her Majesty Queen Elizabeth’s extraordinary life.

“We are united in sorrow at the death of our Monarch, but we are also so aware that His Majesty King Charles and all his family are not just grieving the loss of their Queen, but their mother, grandmother and great-grandmother too.

“Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth began her reign, like King Solomon by asking for wisdom, something that she demonstrated in large measure and to which was added duty, honour, commitment, and faith.

“These are the words that we reach for today to describe the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth, whose passing is mourned not only in her native land but across the Commonwealth and the world, as has been so evident to us in recent days.

“Most of us cannot recall a time when she was not our monarch.

“Committed to the role she assumed in 1952 upon the death of her beloved father, she has been a constant in all of our lives for over 70 years.

“She was determined to see her work as a form of service to others and she maintained that steady course until the end of her life.

“People who were in her company always felt that they were being listened to carefully and attentively and with compassion.

“She possessed a sharp, intelligent mind, with amazing recall, a kindly heart and a gentle sense of humour.

“She understood the breadth of world affairs and also cared

about what happened to all of her people.

“And although sometimes buffeted by events around her, she continued resolutely and cheerfully fulfilled her responsibilities.

“So today we give thanks, not only for the length of her reign, but for the qualities she displayed so steadfastly.

“We recall also with gratitude the many who have supported her throughout her reign.

“We think especially of the Duke of Edinburgh who stood faithfully beside her through their 73 years of marriage, bringing his own energy and intellect to the service of the monarchy.

“Much has been said about the Queen’s contribution to the life of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth which meant so much to her.

“But here in Scotland we acknowledge with gratitude her deep links with our land and its people.

“Her love of the Balmoral estate is well known and being there latterly brought her great comfort.

“There she was valued as a neighbour and a friend and there she drew strength and refreshment during the summer months.

“She was active in the life of civic Scotland, travelling across the country to support numerous causes, entertaining guests at Holyrood Palace and presiding at ceremonial events, many of which took place in this Church.

“Here she received the Scottish crown in 1953, an event vividly memorialised in the painting by the Orcadian artist Stanley Cursiter.

“Her links with the Scottish churches were also deep and

lasting.

“She was the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, but she worshipped in the Church of Scotland here north of the border, at Canongate Kirk and especially at Crathie Kirk where she took her pew each Sunday morning, prevented from doing so latterly only by infirmity.

“She perceived little difficulty in belonging to two Churches and appreciating the strength of each.

“It is clearly evident and without doubt that the Queen’s Christian faith was genuine, and often gave clear and sincere expression in those remarkable Christmas broadcasts.

“She spoke unashamedly of her trust in God and of the example and teaching of Jesus Christ whom she sought to follow as best she could – indeed, of that faith she said she had no regret.

“Her focus on family, on community, on reaching across divisions and differences were evident to us through these short yet meaningful festive messages.

“For 70 years, she reigned as our Queen.

“She has been present amongst us as a follower of Christ and a member of his Church. And for that and much else beside, we give thanks to God together here this day.

“Today we mourn her passing but we also celebrate the long and happy reign that we experienced with her.

“And we pray God’s blessing upon King Charles who will surely draw strength from his mother’s example and the many affectionate tributes of these days and from our assurance to him as a Church of our steadfast prayers at all times and of our unstinting support to him as was offered to his mother, the Queen.”