

Peter Jennings a tribute from John Hughes

I met Peter as a journalist when he came to interview me for an article on my appointment as Vicar of St John's Harborne Birmingham. I saw in him a man of determination and energy.

Over the years we became friends enjoying a common interest in football and cricket. As a staunch Aston Villa supporter he tried to persuade me to turn my allegiance from Arsenal to Aston Villa, but failed.

Peter was a one off. He had huge enthusiasm for life and was a superb networker, as many of you here will know. He was an excellent journalist with a nose and self-confidence for a good story, yet truth mattered to him and he was fair and honest. Peter had an opinion on most matters, which he loved to debate, and provoke a reaction, and many of these were wise observations. He was fun to be with and there was always laughter and teasing at our agreement to disagree.

Like all of us he had his frailties as well as his great strengths. He was aware of his afflictions and open to receiving help from those he trusted, which was a mark of his humility.

I respected Peter and loved the genuineness of his faith and his passion for the church in this country and worldwide. I was with him in times of great trial that he endured when he had a brain haemorrhage in Bangor and was so close to death and in this last illness which he fought more recently. He believed in the power of God to heal and experienced this on several occasions. His faith shone through and he continued to serve the Church he loved to the end.

He was a man who valued prayer and in a number of situations he saw significant answers. One of those answers was that he managed to get to Sarah's wedding when it seemed impossible. I know Stella was a huge rock and support in his life and he held her, Sarah and Joseph, Borge and Malin in his heart and prayers.

I shared his great joy in the recent appointment of Pope Francis and the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby. He believed these two would make a significant contribution on the world stage.

Peter, you fought a good fight, you have finished the race, you have kept the faith. Well done good and faithful servant.