Today we gather to celebrate hope.

Christians are not a people of presumption. We do not presume to merit our own salvation, nor do we presume forgiveness without conversation. Both are sins.

Today’s commemoration is about the hope that we, as Christian faithful have in God’s promise of eternal life. How many times in my life as a priest, I have spoken the following words at a funeral liturgy: “For this is the will of the Father: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and Jesus shall raise that person on the last day.”

We have to face it…death is part of earthly life. But we are reminded that in death, life does not end; it changes. We gather together as a people to remind ourselves of that hope. We pray to the Lord that we
may be open to God’s grace, which strengthens and comfort us when we mourn over the loss of a spouse, children, family or friends.

We gather today as a reminder of God’s infinite mercy and unconditional love. We remember the love of those who have gone before us, who for a short time were in our lives, whose love served as a mirror of Christ in our life. Today we celebrate a hope in Christ who never leaves.

It is our hope that transforms pain into peace, and shapes us as Gods beloved people.