

James Crawford

Dr. James Crawford led a life of service. He served his family by showering his wife Fannie Mae, his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren with love. He served his patients by learning as much as he could about podiatry so that he could bring the art of healing to all their needs. He served his country in the US Army Medical Corps. He served his friends with his soul that radiated a quiet peacefulness. He served his church in the Knights of Columbus and helped us execute the simple but necessary tasks to bring proper worship into this holy place. And, of course, he served God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength.

That's how we got to know him best here at the cathedral. He was a reliable, steadfast disciple of the Lord, who brought all that he had to offer into this holy temple. Today's gospel tells how protective Jesus was of the Temple of Jerusalem. He not only worshipped there, he taught there. People hung with him as he commanded their attention by his words and deeds. They came to know Jesus—and they came to know the Temple.

In the First Book of Maccabees we hear of the purification and rededication of that same Temple earlier in its history after enemies had violated it. The annual eight days in the Jewish celebration of Hanukah continue to remember this historic event. The Temple of God was a holy place that deserved appropriate words and deeds, its honor passed on from one generation to the next.

In response to that reading, today's responsorial gives us a canticle sung by King David at the end of his life. Not included among the Book of Psalms, this song comes from the First Book of Chronicles. David had the inspiration to build a Temple, but the success of that construction fell to his son Solomon. So, Solomon built the Temple that enemies later destroyed, that faithful Jews reconstructed, and, in the time of the Maccabees, that was violated anew and rededicated with offerings and sacrifices. That was the Temple that Jesus loved and protected.

St. Paul called our own bodies a temple that God lovingly and wonderfully made. We can use our bodies for good or ill. Sometimes enemies violate it, and we rely on the presence of Jesus Christ to protect it. Some people love and heal bodies; they treat them like the temple that they are. At the end of our days, we present our bodies back to the One who created them and sustained them all our days.

Today we thank God for sending Dr. James Crawford into our lives, for beautifully embodying the temple of God's presence, and for restoring physical and spiritual health to the bodies of others. Today we ask the Lord to receive back the soul of his servant James. May God heal him of anything that might keep him from his eternal reward. May James rest in peace. And may his life of service inspire us to protect the temple of our bodies and to use them for the glory of God.