

## A Message from the Monsignor

# The Journey

Teresa Flynn gifted me for Christmas with a copy of the first edition of my book "Living the Psalms" which is now out of print. I hope you enjoy this excerpt from its preface. There is more to come.

My mother, God rest her soul, called herself the family scribe, and so, indeed, she was. It was she who kept up a constant correspondence with her seven children. At times we were scattered over four continents; but Mother's letters defied distances and their regularity was broken only by war, occasional local disasters, and once or twice in wartime by the government censor who thought she was using code words when, in fact, she was describing with her accustomed detail what was happening around her as she wrote.

"Your dad is serving a drink to Ned Higgins. Joe has just returned from Mulingar; cattle are up in price. I am moving to the dining room table; I can't concentrate while they are arguing about the elections. Wait, the radio is just blaring out something about West Africa. What's his name? Glory be to God – he has been assassinated. Human life means nothing to some people. But God is always with us – John, we remember you every night in the family Rosary." On and on she went, absorbing and communicating not only the news of family but also neighbors, relatives, and friends. Through her letters the whole ecology, her own stream of consciousness, everyone and everything around her, crossed oceans and continents to come thoroughly and vibrantly alive for us, her children. We used to refer to the USO (the United Services Organization) as a home away from home. Well, Mother's letters were all of that.

Dad interpreted the lingo of lawyers, civil servants, and the other representatives of officialdom who were the bane of our simple farming community. He filled out their government forms and drew up wills for sixty percent of our neighbors, but I don't recall ever having received a letter from him. He knew that Mother said everything.

*Msgr. John Sheridan, from his book "A Lay Psalter"*