



THE BLACK BOX TREASURES (SPECIAL EDITION #23)

There is an interesting term called the “black box theory”. It speaks about an object which can be analyzed in terms of its input and output, but there is no knowledge of its internal workings. Many of us probably don’t know that in our Archives here in Rome we have more than 200 black boxes. Some of those treasures have seen the light of day in many publications, but there are still others waiting to be seen...

(The good old Fathers - #23)

The month of November invites us to reflect on the mystery of death. On All Souls’ Day we commemorate all the faithful departed. We pray for all those who preceded us in our journey toward Heaven. We think

about our deceased parents, friends and CRs.

Fr. Eugene Funcken, C.R. in one of his letters written to Fr. Peter Semenenko, C.R., expressed his grief over the loss of “the good old fathers” from the Community (ACRR 13131). He wrote: “Oh, my dear Father, it is often difficult for me, heart wrenching, to think that the good old fathers are passing away, one after the other. Surely you won’t mind if I enclose the short poems which express my mood and feelings at such moments”. In the poem “Longing for Death” he confesses “Oh, to go to the dear dead/ I want to go into the silent grave,/ And to see all, all again! The ones I loved!”. In his second poem “My Consolation” he adds “Oh, how bitterly I regret, /That I did not bring them more joy, /That I did not love them more, /And so often even saddened!”.

The letter of Fr. Eugene was written in German and has been translated in English by Fr. James Wahl, C.R. but those two poems were not translated. Thanks to John and Anne Kroisenbrunner, the parishioners of St. Mary’s Church in Kitchener, we can read them in English. The Polish translation was prepared by Fr. Pawel Kruczek, C.R. So today I would like to share those poems with you.

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine et lux perpetua luceat eis, requiescant in pace. Amen

(Eugene Funcken, C.R., Letter to Peter Semenenko, C.R., dated July 6, 1877, ACRR 1313;
translation John & Anne Kroisenbrunner)

My Consolation

Oh, I want to weep, weep,
That my beloved ones,
Who are now resting in the silent grave,
Once so sparsely loved.

Oh, how bitterly I regret,
That I did not bring them more joy,
That I did not love them more,
And so often even saddened!

Only one consolation has remained with me,
Oh, I can still love them now,
I can still comfort them, invigorate
Through prayer and pious gifts!

Sweet, blissful thought!
They, they do not know the barrier,
Are still in union with me,
And they know that I weep.

And they see in my heart,
The so bitter pain of regret,
Knowing, feeling what I'm doing
Now for their souls rest.

And they softly smile down:
Soon, oh, soon we'll see each other again,
We'll come to you with comfort and blessings,
Gladly towards, faithful soul!

And I feel my heart is warming
From the previous embrace,
And my sighing and my yearning
Dissolve in blissful tears.

Longing for Death

Oh, to go to the dear dead
I want to go into the silent grave,
And to see all, all again
The ones I loved!

Although there are still here and there
Many a dear heart, alas, alas,
Most have been gone so long,
The others will also follow.

And are the loved ones in this world
To all of us still of so much worth,
As some hard little word may fall,
That hurts our heart!

But where the dear dead are,
No heart is saddened,
Too peaceful is one there of mind,
Too pure will be loved there.

Thus to go to the dear dead
I want to be in the silent grave,
And see all, all again,
The ones I once loved!

Sehnsucht nach den lieben Todten.

Ach, zu den lieben Todten geh'n
Möcht' ich in's stille Grab,
Und alle, alle wiederseh'n,
Die ich geliebet hab'!

Denn gibt es auch noch hier und dort
Manch Liebes Herz, ach, ach,
Die meisten sind schon lange fort,
Die andern folgen nach.

Und sind die Lieben auf der Welt
Uns alle noch so werth,
Wie manches harte Wörtchen fällt,
Das unser Herz verschert!

Joch wo die lieben Todten sind,
Da wird kein Herz betrübt,
Zu friedlich ist man dort gesinnt,
Zu rein wird dort geliebt.

Drum zu den lieben Todten geh'n
Möcht' ich in's stille Grab,
Und alle, alle wiederseh'n,
Die einst geliebt ich habe! —

Mein Frost.

O, ich möchte weinen, weinen,
Dass ich die geliebten Meinen,
Die nun ruh'n im stillen Grabe,
Einst so karg geliebt habe!

O, wie das mich bitter reuet,
Dass ich sie nicht mehr erfreuet,
Dass ich sie nicht mehr geliebet,
Und gar oft so sehr betrübet!

Nur ein Frost ist mir geblieben,
O, ich kann sie jetzt noch lieben,
Kann sie jetzt noch trösten, laben
Durch Gebet und fromme Gaben!

Güßer, seliger Gedanke!
Sie, sie kennen nicht die Schranke,
Sind mit mir noch im Vereine,
Und sie wissen, dass ich weine.

Und sie seh'n in meinem Herzen
Der so bittern Treue Schmerzen,
Wissen, fühlen, was ich thue
Jetzt für ihrer Seelen Ruhe.

Und sie lächeln mild hernieder:
„Bald, bald seh'n wir uns wieder,
Zieh'n wir dir mit Frost und Segen,
Treue Seele, froh entgegen!“ —

Und ich fühl' mein Herz erwärmen
Vom dereinstigen Uarmen,
Und mein Seuffen und mein Sehnen
Löst sich auf in Wonnethränen.

