

WHAT IS ETERNAL!

More than any other rocket scientist Wernher von Braun (1912-1997) was responsible for coordinating the first successful human moon landing. The date was July 16, 1969 and it was one of the very rare occasions in history that the people of the world watched as one body in hope and admiration for the venture to succeed. Very recently one of the courageous astronauts on this mission died he was Michael Collins.

Not long before he died Wernher von Braun wrote these profound words; *"I think that science has a number of surprises in store for the sceptics of this world. Because nothing in nature not even the tiniest particle is ever able to disappear without some trace of its existence remaining. Nature does not know of extinction only of transformation. Everything that science has shown me indicates that there is an enduring spiritual reality beyond any physical death."*

One of the enduring challenges of many world religious leaders especially those of the Jewish, Islamic and Christian faith is to enable people to appreciate that life in this world is a *launching pad* for an eternal life.

Whenever I preside at a funeral just before the coffin is lowered into the ground or is sent into the crematorium oven, I quote these beautiful and consoling words of Saint Paul; *"Our true home is in heaven and it's here that we await our saviour Jesus Christ."* (Philippians Chapter 3 verse 12).
Fr Martin R Maunsell