



Dear friends,

A few years ago I attended a performance of Mozart's 'Requiem,' at the Sydney Opera House. The music was written at the end of his life. A 'Requiem,' are the parts of our Catholic Mass: the Kyrie, Gloria, Holy Holy and Lamb of God set to music for singing at a funeral Mass. Of course to listen to the whole Mass being sung by a choir and accompanied by an orchestra takes two hours. So the music, while grand and majestic, is written in a very sombre tone to convey the sadness of death, while focussing our minds of the glory of the Resurrection through the beauty of music.

While I was being soothed by the soft tones of the Holy Holy, the music came to an abrupt end. The conductor turned toward the audience, and said: 'this is the point at which Mozart died at the age of thirty-five.' The moment gave the audience a window into the tragedy of this great composer's life cut short by tragedy.

The conductor then went on to explain that this was not the end, but that Mozart's 'musical disciple', Franz Sussmayer, completed the work, and then, gave us a greater insight into how the disciple completed the work in the style of Mozart by finishing the performance.

For me, that moment, captures what our feast today, the Ascension of the Lord, is all about. While the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:1-11), gives us a more literal interpretation of the Lord ascending into Heaven, the gospel of Matthew (Mt 28: 16-20) focusses more on the mission of the disciples as being sent out in the name of Jesus to baptise, and preach the Good News of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus' Ascension to the Father, was the 'great commission' to us to go forth and build the Kingdom of God, while like Franz Sussmayer, remaining faithful to the work of the Master.

Sometimes when I'm looking up websites that are not complete there is a note saying: 'THIS IS A WORK IN PROGRESS.' I like to think that we, and the Kingdom of God, are a work in progress. We are never quite finished. Our work, journey, pilgrimage toward Heaven is always on-going. Some years ago a famous psychologist by the name of Carl Rogers coined the term 'unfinished business' by which he refers to people who may be terminally ill, dealing with those parts of their life which they feel need to be attended to before they die. In a sense, this again, is what the work of the Kingdom is for us.

Jesus, has given us the authority to tend and care for the people whom he calls to membership in the Kingdom of God. No one is excluded from *this* Kingdom, and it is our hope one day to join Jesus in Heaven when our pilgrimage will be complete and we can enjoy the fullness of the Resurrection from the dead.

For now, we are gifted with the mission of the disciples, and the Franz Sussmayer's of this world, to complete the work of the Master here and now.

Easter blessings,

Fr Kelvin