

## Sermon at the Funeral of Margaret Kelbie - 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015

*"I am the resurrection he says, If anyone believes in me, even though he dies, he will live."* (John 11:25)

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

My dear friends; on a day like this, we reflect on these words of Jesus. For the believer, the words we have heard are words of comfort and consolation. To the unbeliever, it is a mere balderdash. Jesus, through his death and resurrection, has given his followers hope. Just as Christ died and rose again, we, his followers, believe that death is not going to be the end of things. The resurrection is the core of Christianity. It is not an appendage. The resurrection is one of the key main three miracles of creation, the others being Creation and the Incarnation.

There is always sadness about the departure of someone we love, even if the departure is temporary. The departure of death brings us the greatest sadness because it is the final departure of one whom we love and with whom we have lived.

As we say farewell to our mother, sister and friend, the service is for the living. It is an opportunity for us to remember that we human beings have a limited lifespan. Most times, we see ourselves as all important, as people deserving respect and of course we should have the last word in everything we are involved. Others around us do not matter much as long as we have our way.

A funeral service is an opportunity to set our priorities right. One day it will be our turn in the position that Margaret is today. She is lucky that at her last moment she was surrounded by friends and received full spiritual strength for her journey.

If it is your turn tomorrow, how will it be? The journey Margaret is making today is the journey we start from the day we were born.

The difference between that and other journeys is the direction. The journey towards death is made moving backwards. We don't know how far or how near it is. Since it is a must, our duty as the people of God is to be prepared everyday of our life. The question each of us will ask is this. If this moment is my last, how prepared am I? What account will I give to my Creator about my life? For those of us who are still alive, there is always an opportunity for repentance and amendment of our ways. Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is yet to come, what matters is now.

A look at the Gospel of Matthew chapter 25 gives us a clue as to what the criteria for giving account of our lives.

How have you treated your neighbour? Beginning from those you dislike most. Is it surprising to hear that the measure of your love of God is your love of your neighbour? We shall all stand one day to give account of the talents God has given to us. How are you with them and how have you used these gifts in relation to your neighbour?

Have you forgiven those who have offended you? Then expect God to forgive you. Have you come to the aid of those in need? Then expect a help when things are hard. Christ has assured us that death is not the end. That is why he said, "I am the resurrection and life. Anyone who believes in me though he dies shall live."

This service is an opportunity for us to examine our lives, make a complete U-turn and resolve to do better.

Today, Margaret has gone to give account of her life and what she did with her multiple talents.

Margaret, as I know her, was a true and an unassuming servant of God.

As a Pastoral Assistant, she performed her duties to the best of her abilities. Margaret always put the service and welfare of others first before hers. She was always available to assist in the administration of the Sacraments. Bad weather was never an

obstacle in her early opening of the church or taking communion to the sick.

For all that, we are grateful that she was able to give generously to society and now she has gone for her reward.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**