

Requiem Homily for Fr Terry Perkins RIP 24 January 2022

Three times Terry was called especially by our heavenly father, first at his baptism over eighty years ago, which was to keep the flame of faith alive in his heart until he go out to meet the Lord, secondly on 31 March 1968 when he was called to the priesthood and thirdly on 10 January this year when he was called home to be with the Lord forever. That life was a life of faith, of friendship, in both of fidelity.

It was Mother Theresa of Calcutta who said: "we are called not to be successful but to be faithful". Faithfulness is a very precious gift, it is the ability to stick to one's choice and to turn the inevitable obstacles and setbacks into positive elements of one's chosen path. It requires not so much physical strength as strength of character, of soul and spirit. Those elements Terry lived out and we saw and recognised it in his life. Terry was one of those faithful people, faithful to the priesthood, to his friends and above all to the church.

Our readings today reflect the life Terry lived. To those who knew him well there is no doubt that the prophet Isaiah knew Terry. We know he liked a banquet of rich food but we also know that he rejoiced that the Lord has saved us. St Paul in the second reading reminds us that nothing can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord. Again that was the foundation stone of Terry's faith. The gospel shows us the importance of the first day of the week which we celebrate every Sunday. So many of you attended mass celebrated by Terry where we all recognise the Lord in the breaking of bread.

Just four short years ago we celebrated our golden jubilee of priesthood. When Pope St. John Paul II celebrated his golden jubilee he wrote:

Friends, this is what Jesus called the apostles this is what he also wishes to call us thanks to the sacrament of holy orders we share in his priesthood. Let us listen to these words with great emotion and humility, they contain the truth first of all about friendship but also a truth about ourselves who share in the priesthood of Christ as ministers of the eucharist".

When we repeat the words he spoke over the bread and wine and through our own ministry the same consecration that he brought about takes place. Can there be a fuller expression of friendship than this. It goes to the very heart of our ministry. This to me would sum up the life of Terry as a priest of our diocese and a member of the class of '68.

For now it is enough to praise a fine man, a good priest and to pray for his eternal peace. May the light, joy and love he brought into our lives continue to burn within us and may he rest in peace.