



**Seventh Sunday of Easter (Year A)  
Installation of Fr Alexis Vega Orsorio at Baldivis Parish**

**Homily**

**By the Most Rev Bishop Don Sproxtton  
Auxiliary Bishop of Perth**

**Mother Teresa of Kolkata Church, Baldivis Parish  
Sunday 21 May, 2023**

As many of you would realise, the city is pretty much locked down this morning because of the *HBF Run for a Reason*. That is an annual event, and it is occurring this morning. So, the freeway around the city and all the many roads within the city itself have been locked down. So that would account I think, for the lateness of us starting the Mass this morning.

Looking at that huge crowd of people who are doing this run and raising funds for various medical reasons, it occurred to me that, that run, as St Paul says, that race, is something which is very much a symbol if you like, or an image, of what we as the church are about, what we as disciples of Jesus are about.

We are also in a race, a race with Christ, in order to bring the Gospel to our brothers and sisters who live around us, and who are yet to know Christ. The intent is to build up the communities of our parishes, because we work with Christ to bring these people to know Him, and to love Him, and to follow Him. That basically is the mission of every parish.

The other thing I would say this morning is that a parish community like yours, belongs to Christ, first of all. Why I say that, is that it is very easy for us to believe, to hold an opinion, to hold a view that the way that I see the parish being run and the way that I would like things to happen in my parish, should be the vision, or the idea that everyone has e.

We must never forget though, that this community belongs to Christ. And as the Archbishop said, when he became Archbishop of Perth, we need to return our communities, the church to Christ, and we need to return Christ to the church. We must never forget that we are working with Christ, we are working on the mission of Christ when we work as a community. We are working with Christ especially when we are able to look beyond our own needs and wants, to that work of evangelisation of bringing Christ into the lives of others, helping them to know Christ, as we ourselves are learning to know Christ.

Whenever there is the installation of a parish priest, as I have said, I think last time I came down for this event, it is to begin a new stage in the parish's history. We mark the history of a parish



very commonly by looking at the terms of priests who have been here, looking at that time that they have been with the community, working with the community and developing the parish in many ways. And so, we enter into another new period.

Father Alexis, I know has been already here for a few months, but now is the time for us, given the opportunity that I have to be here today to celebrate this formal installation. Father Michael Moore SM was saying in the sacristy beforehand, it's a bit like Charles, isn't it? King Charles? He became king on the death of his mother but there was a period of time before he was finally crowned. I am not going to crown Father Alexis today and you might say thank goodness for that, because that ceremony took two hours. But what we are doing today, of course, is acknowledging that Father Alexis has been given the responsibility of leading and working with all the members of the parish, particularly focused on bringing Christ to the others around us and helping us to grow in our understanding of who Christ is, so that we can truly represent Him.

So, as we celebrate this milestone for the parish, we also are aware that, from the very beginning, as we have heard in the readings of the Mass today, the intention of Christ in gathering that small group of disciples of being with them, helping them to know who He was, and experiencing some very good moments, but some very bad moments, when He was training them.

That they were given this special time, from the time of the resurrection of Christ, to the Ascension, for them to really understand who He is, and what that mission was to be, that they were called to be involved in. So it is, I guess, in a way for us to see that we go through those phases of formation, and growth in faith that will enable us till the end, to do what they did brilliantly, and that was to be apostles, to go out into the world, with, certainly at times fear, but with the spirit guiding them, and giving them courage. This would be something that we will celebrate next week in the Feast of Pentecost. With those gifts of the Spirit, they went out with courage. And as we hear in the Psalm, they went out in fear, but they came back rejoicing because of how they saw the Spirit working through them, to bring Christ to others.

So let us pray that we will continue in this journey wherever we are in that journey of getting to know Christ. Let us be effective witnesses of our faith before others, bringing them to Christ, and bringing them to the joy and the hope that there is in being his disciples. We now move to the formal installation of Father Alexis, so I ask that you pray with me and with one another, that Father Alexis will be one who knows the responsibilities of being a parish priest, but at the same time, is able to minister and to provide that leadership and that example of faith that comes with the leadership that he is meant to provide for us here. To be a man of faith who grows in faith daily, because of the spirit within him, but also because of the spirit that is within this community to which he responds with openness and with love.