

**St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church
Moore Street, Adelaide**

Reflection for the 7th Sunday of Easter: The Sunday after Ascension

There must have been some sadness at or after the ascension of Christ into heaven even though the scriptures say that the witnesses of the ascension were filled with great joy. We must bear in mind that immediately before Easter Day there was the incredible grief and disillusionment of Good Friday.

Worth remembering too, there is often sadness along with joy of a last day at school or starting a new job. My own recollections include the joyful anticipation of beginning a new parish accompanied by the sadness of leaving the people of another. Happily you can take with you in memory and influence what was good in one's previous parish or position.

We shouldn't try to live in the past. As much as we might dislike the present it is, in itself, the way to the future. Even if, on the other hand, our past was terrible, we can hope that out of the evils of this past God can prepare a greater good.

People of Christian faith believe that all is prepared even though we do not know the future for certain and are like the disciples on the day of the ascension, looking up into the sky for Jesus whom they could not see. We know that the road into the future is part of the way to God. Prayer about the future gets us a little way along this road without knowing exactly its route or destination in minute detail.

Before his ascension Jesus explains that his leaving the disciples in a physical sense is an act of love. He knows that the future nature of his presence will be better for everyone in general. Notwithstanding any sadness it is the correct change which needs to happen. Then there will be Pentecost, when the disciples will receive the Holy Spirit, enabling them to do and be all that following the way of Christ invites.

Fr Graeme Kaines.