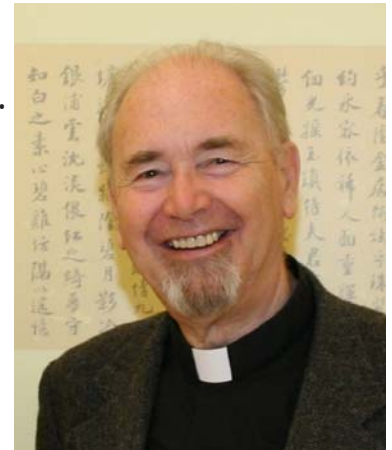




Father Kane, Our Beloved Warden

Father A. J. Deignan S.J.



Father Ciaran F Kane, former Director of Adam Schall Residence of United College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, passed away at the age of eighty on 5 February 2013 in Hong Kong. Throughout his distinguished affiliation with United College in the past decades, Father Kane has made invaluable advice and guidance to the development of the College. He was loved and respected by the College community; his dedication will be forever cherished.

Appended below is the Eulogy for Father Ciaran F Kane, written by Father Deignan at Father Kane's Requiem Mass on 14 February 2013:

We are gathered here this morning to celebrate the life of Father Ciaran Kane and to pray together in thanksgiving for the gift of his life, his friendship, love and care, which he gave in very generous service of others.

We pray too for his sister Eileen, and for Carol who have come from Dublin for relatives and friends and for all of us whose lives were touched by his, that God would console and strength us in our faith at this time, believing in Christ's promise of our resurrection and that we will live with him in joy and happiness forever. We know that his departure from us is for him to arrive at his final destination, Heaven.

In the readings of today's liturgy, God speaks to console us in the words of the first reading from Ecclesiastes (3:1-14) God says through the prophet "there is a time to live and a time to die". All of us go on this journey through life, exiled from our home. I think Father Ciaran while he was in hospital a few days before he died said to Peter Tam "I think God is calling me". Yes, God was calling him home.

We weep and are sorrowful or sad when we have to say "good bye" to someone we love. "There is a time to weep and a time to be glad". We are glad for Father Ciaran as we know that he has arrived home and is enjoying eternal happiness.

Again God speaks in the first reading "I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy". And then adds "and to do good while they live" Father Kane brought happiness to others by his love of people, his kind personality, his sense of humour, his interest in others, his enjoyment of companionship, and his love of food and wine. He had so many friends who enjoyed his company and prayed for him, cared and visited him especially in his illness.

"And to do good while they lived." Reflecting back on Father Kane's life it is just amazing all the good he has done in God's service and in the service of Church and others. He had many gifts and many interests. He was a gifted teacher, preacher and spiritual guide. But perhaps the gift he used most and enjoyed was music and singing. He had a wonderful clear and interesting voice which he used so effectively and creatively in his programmes on the radio or television.

He brought the "Good News", the knowledge and love of Christ to many listeners and viewers when he did the commentaries on broadcast Masses, in his "Morning Prayers". He broadcast 2,200 of them over 20 years, in his "Midday Prayers" – he did over 100 of them, in his programme which he called "Sunday", on television his "Faces of Christmas" programme which was scripted and spoken by himself, and the sacred music weekly programme of one hour which he called "Gloria" which was broadcast 1996-1999 which reached a top audience rating on Radio 4 and has since been repeated.

Even before his ordination as a Priest he showed his talent by directing the theologians choir on television Christmas Mass. He also wrote and got published a book on "Easter" and did eleven programmes on English Cathedrals and Church Music entitled "Sounds of Stone". He was a keen choral singer and was a member of Hong Kong Bach choir during the 1980's and 1990's and helped to form the H.K. Philharmonic Orchestra Chorus. He sang in Mahler's "Resurrection" with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the opening of the new Cultural Centre Concert Hall in 1989. For the Jesuits he produced over 200 issues of a monthly newsletter.

He had prepared himself for this wonderful apostolate and developed his talents by attending the Dublin Communications Centre for Radio and Television, the Catholic Radio and Television Centre in London and the Educational Television Centre in Manila.

In 1972 he was given another important service which he performed until 1994, the Director or Warden of Adam Schall Residence for students in The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Here he had contact with the 138 students in the Residence and with the staff and students of the University providing them with Sunday Mass and spiritual guidance and support.

Finally from 1998 he took on the important task of being the Director in the Xavier retreat house in Cheung Chau which he got renovated with the financial help of many of his friends. He was very creative in making the Retreat House a spiritual experience for those who came to find there peace and spiritual growth. He loved Cheung Chau and his work as spiritual guide. He was really sad not having the energy to go back there after he got too weak to climb the hill to the retreat house.

Here is a person who used so well the talents God had given him in his service. "To do good while they live" says Ecclesiastes in the first reading. Father Ciaran Kane is certainly a very good example of someone who did good while he lived.

Christ promised that "even a cup of cold water given in My Name will not go without its reward". We can imagine what a welcome and reward Christ will give him in Heaven.

In today's Gospel Christ invites us and says "Come to Me all you who labour and are heavily burdened and I will give you rest". Father Kane's answer is "Here I am Lord, it is time for me to rest and be with you in joy and happiness in the Community of the Trinity and of the angels and saints."

In the Apocalypse (14 v.13) we read "Happy are those who die in the Lord. Now they can rest forever after their work, since their good deeds go with them."

Let us listen to God's consoling words to us who will miss Ciaran's physical presence among us as we celebrate his life and thank God for giving us such a wonderful brother, relative, friend and companion. We pray that we too will be united with him one day when the Lord calls us.