



Dear Parishioners,

This past year has witnessed a strengthening of prayer, community and apostolic initiatives strongly supported by you our parishioners. It has been wonderful to be part of these pastoral activities that bring with it insights to our faith journey.

Prayer Based Initiatives:

Our biblical timeline series offered a way into interpreting and reading the bible. The introduction of our Psalms course has brought new perspectives that have helped people to approach the psalms more personally - praying them in different ways. The San Egidio community have provided a reach out to the local poor and connected the parish with local care homes as well as a children's education unit with special needs. We've witnessed the ordination of Fr Alex, currently studying in Rome, doing biblical studies. We've opened up our 150 years anniversary of our presence in Kensington and all this in a year, which has seen the inauguration of a Holy Year of Faith.

Sacred Music

Our musical tradition has also seen an injection of new life on a Saturday evening. Thanks to Andrew Nicholson we've managed to introduce what I would consider a contemplative styled liturgy with a different cantor leading us in song each week. The Responsorial psalms are a delight to hear. Simon Lloyd, a wonderful young man full of new ideas and experienced in various liturgical traditions, finds himself inheriting the mantle as Director of Music at the 11am Latin Mass. We are already beginning to see the fruits of his labour; delicately and respectfully he has been experimenting and enhancing the celebration of our traditional Latin mass in ways that are moving and prayerful to encounter.

As people are finding out 50 years ago the Church embarked on a journey of renewal. As a parish we are called to remain committed to sensitively discern ways and means of sustaining what it means to be Church in the 21st century. I thank those involved with the various ministries bringing good liturgical celebrations through faithful and dedicated preparations. I think of the many "readers"; "musicians" "singers" "collectors" "catechists" "offertory bearers" those involved with organizing rotas; who participate in ecumenical groups representing the parish; who volunteer to give their time to works needing done around the parish to strengthen the bonds of unity among us.

All are discernable signs of the joy of Christ. There will be other opportunities throughout this Year of Faith to draw on the Church's life and bring about even greater bonds of joy and happiness within the community.

Apostolic initiatives

Christmas eve will witness a repeated "sacred Meal" for the homeless in our basement. Volunteers are needed. Pop in to the reception to find out if you can get involved.

There are a number of "cell" groups prayerfully exploring lives and teachings of the church through saints or biographies of people with Christian faith perspectives. It is noticeable these are mostly for women - nothing wrong with that indeed, but, from looking this past year at our attendances at mass I asked myself where have all the men gone?

One of the things that I have become more aware of within the community is a serious lack of men!! The reasons are obvious in some cases - marriages are a mixture of different Christian and non-Christian husbands. In the coming year I hope to address this situation by creating a "men's breakfast" group. So please stay tuned to the newsletter.

Future initiatives:

Looking ahead to next year, there will be the introduction of a Prayer and Art group. This will be based on the teachings of what is being called "Theology of the Body" - "google" for more information! The Notre Dame du Vie will be introducing a Series called "Carmel: The Spirit of Prayer" it will be based on the teachings of a French Carmelite Marie-Eugene (not to be confused with the Foundress of the Assumption sisters). Taize evenings along with certain feast day treats are in store.

Thank you for making all this happen. May the Christmas joy that binds God to us as a sign of his everlasting love, bring about His plan in your own lives.

May you all have a Happy Christmas and a New Year filled with even greater news of joy and peace for you and yours.

Fr Prior and Community.