

We should remember in this context the five precepts of the Church.

“In order to nourish the moral and liturgical life of the Body of Christ, Mother Church has established five positive laws, decreed by the pastoral authorities, which are meant to identify the minimum spiritual commitment required of the faithful. These five laws are known as The Precepts of the Church and are found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, citations 2041-43.” Four of these are well known.

However, the fifth is: “ You shall help provide for the needs of the Church each according to his own ability.” In other words the minimum spiritual commitment and therefore, help us to heaven is to help provide for the needs of the Church. We have an obligation to this.”

Some things we can work at immediately:

- 1) Each of us can already help by creating a warm and friendly atmosphere and actively participating in the liturgy.
- 2) We can acknowledge already the roles played by members of the congregations.

Some priorities which I think can be achieved fairly easily:

- 1) Involvement of the children – in the liturgy, praise and worship, providing them with a full and fruitful catechesis. We have to acknowledge that something more is needed here.
- 2) Adult catechesis
- 3) Those with musical talents to be involved in praise and worship and supporting our choir.
- 4) Community outreach – to support those lonely or isolated members of our community.
- 5) More adoration but facilitated for those wishing to come but perhaps needing more directed time.

Thank you for reading – onwards and upwards – for nothing is impossible with God.

Fr Dominic.



From the Parish Priest's Desk.....

Dear Parishioners,

Over the Summer, it will be a shortened bulletin. The Summer is a good opportunity to reflect on the past year and plan for the new one. Although, we have different year starts, for example, Advent or January 1st; in many ways September with the end of the Summer holidays and the start of the new school term marks a beginning to parish life again. The Summer break is an opportunity for prayer, reflection and planning.

I would like firstly to pass on a positive reflection on our parish. A Lithuanian couple was visiting for a few weeks and they attended both weekend and weekly masses. They shared how much they enjoyed the liturgy, the parish and the general atmosphere. This is a great reflection on our parish and how the diversity of our congregation can work together. Secondly, we need to bear in mind the Jubilee Year in 2025 and the need to start looking forward to our bicentenary celebrations in 2027.

Pope Francis and our bishop, Patrick, remind us that at the heart of revival has to be a spiritual renewal. Bishop Patrick has at the heart of this renewal three important stages: Encounter with Christ; Discipleship and Missionary Discipleship. A brief recap: our spiritual lives depend upon a genuine personal encounter with Jesus through the Holy Spirit – it is this and only this that will lead to a genuine transformation of souls. However, once this has taken place, the person needs to become a disciple and follow Jesus. This involves catechesis especially a training in prayer. Remember St John Paul II said that all parishes need to become centers of prayer. But neither of these two will be complete without mission – having a transformative effect on those around us. Mission and the Christian identity are two halves of the same coin.

To accomplish this, a few things are necessary:

1) A vision (Prov 29:18 – without a vision people perish) – we need to know where we are going; or as Stephen Covey said that we must begin with the end in mind. The Church and our Bishop Patrick have given us a blueprint but we need to adapt this blueprint to our particular local situation.

2) What do we need to accomplish this?

3) What obstacles stand in our way.



I would like to share a vision that some members of the parish discussed:

Introduction St. Mary's Catholic Church currently serves a vibrant tapestry of different communities and liturgical groups and rites. However, to foster a sense of unity and family, it is imperative that we transform this diverse congregation into a cohesive, welcoming community; ensuring that every member feels recognized, valued, and spiritually nourished.

Vision To create a united St. Mary's Catholic Church family where every congregant feels a sense of belonging, dignity, and fulfillment. By enhancing our liturgical celebrations and fostering active participation, we aim to build a vibrant, inclusive church community.

I would like to add to this that every member of the parish:

- a) Experiences true freedom in Christ and is set free from any burdens/bondages that are hindering this, including healing.
- b) Is making progress in prayer and discipleship
- c) Has the necessary tools for coping with the modern world.
- d) Feels able to turn to the parish for the necessary support in any area of their life.
- e) Is equipped for mission.

The physical renovation of the Church etc is important but must be at the service of the above. Any physical renewal without a spiritual renewal in a parish as Pope Francis reminds us is of no value.

In addition whatever is asked of people must be simple, manageable and achievable. The burden must be shared across the parish and the priests freed up for their role.



To bring parishioners up to date with what we have in place in terms of governance:

1) We have expanded the Finance Committee which will for the time being also work as PPC. Members are Fr Dominic, Deacon Martyn, Chaz; Louise; Nici; Jenny and Margaret. We would particularly welcome a representative from the African and Filipino communities.

2) We have a very successful project group which has been working at integrating the communities through various events; as well as fundraising and undertaking various projects. Members are: Fr Dominic, Fr Stan, Deacon Martyn, Mark, Magda, Grazina, Grazyna, Sandra, Paul, Sarah and Carolyn. They organized for example the opening of the hall international food event, the Corpus Christi BBQ, Renovation of the Hall and Sacristies, church roof, the welcome banner, as well as many cleaning tasks.

3) A few parishioners that have been helping me with spiritual planning in various ways: Kene, Miraj, Priya and some consultants in this from the diocese who have and will be helping direct us: Paul Bodenham, Joe Hopkins

4) I have a parish secretary, Ula, who is helping me with various tasks.

5) We have our safeguarding officers Theo and Suganthi and our hall manager, Tony.

We also have groups that are already up and running in no particular order: Altar Servers, Florists, Choir, Women's guild, readers, cleaners, counters and extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist.

Apologies to anyone or any group inadvertently omitted.

One of the main things we need to do is to empower people to become involved and feel liberated to form and to fulfill their own particular calling. A goal would also be that each member of the parish if possible should be involved with one particular liturgical group and one spiritual one. Even our sick and housebound and those at North Sea Camp can and should be involved. These groups would form the cells or building blocks of the community.

This will be a journey and people need to voluntarily become involved but gradually over time this is certainly feasible.

