

Family Matters

Our theme has for the past six months been **A journey in Faith From Advent to Easter**. On this journey, we have been followers with Jesus as he taught both his disciples and the people. We have learned. We have observed and have felt the grace from His message entering us.

We are currently in a time in our Church calendar that is the dark time during which He prepares to hand over to those He has brought along. How close is that to the world in which we currently exist? We, today, are in dark times also, both morally and socially. Will we, as did the Disciples, have the strength to adhere to His values?



The candles of Family Life have continued to burn in the Church, signifying a constant focus on our purpose. During this period, our team's efforts have focused on developing sound communication, and creating mutual understanding. One such programme has been emphasising a specific value each month:

- In February we emphasised **Honesty – Integrity**
- in March **Responsibility – being good Role Models**

Both of these values are typical of His example to the Disciples and to us.

Other initiatives of our team are:

- Reinstatement of the wearing of name tags at services to extend friendliness
- The introduction by the Parish Office of SMS communication and frequency of contact
- Broadening understanding through the emphasis on taking Advent candles into the home, through the Children's Church
- The piloting of a Marriage Enrichment process, which relies heavily on honest and open communication
- Enclosures in the Pew Leaflet relating to Family Matters issues
- The piloting of a Men's Breakfast to complement the many meetings available during the day for the wives

- The development of a range of literature, to be made available in the church, offering information and sources of help

This is some of the work a small group is undertaking to enhance communication within the parish family. It remains for it to lead to improved communication within families who make up the parish. The fruits of this are evident in a revitalised activity and participation in parish activities, both social and worship. There is evidence of more active participation in works of compassion.

We are reminded by John in his Gospel: he records, at the time of the Last Supper, just after Judas had departed Jesus saying:

The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own. The Father who dwells in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me. Otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.

Very Truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do. And, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father... You know Him, because he abides in you, and he will be in you. (John 14: 10-12, 17b. Note also James 2: 26 ..faith without works is dead.)

We now plan to look past the Crucifixion to the Resurrection, to post-Easter. **We** will have to continue doing His works. Our theme will be **Family Resurrection**.

In this phase we plan to seek out the current issues and concerns within families, particularly centred around Communication, and Values. In this we need inputs from families and are devising interventions to achieve this.

We will do the work necessary to help families resist the current environment and resurrect the healed family so that in itself it will join in 'doing the works' just as the Apostles did once they had survived the impact of the crucifixion and the subsequent resurrection.

The period will be from the **Resurrection to Advent**, the period during which the Apostles went out and grew the church, and carried on His teaching. We would aim to weave our efforts intimately within the Church calendar.

For example, Pentecost is clearly a time that focuses on effective Communication: "Talking, Listening, Seeing, Understanding, hence Believing." Quoting Isaiah, Paul said (Acts 28: 23-27):

This people's heart has grown callous
Their ears are hard of hearing
And they have shut their eyes; otherwise they might see with their eyes
And hear with their ears
Understand with their heart and be converted

Let us draw the most we can from the Lenten experience and use this as a time for us to strengthen our resolve to help others find ways to help themselves.

Please volunteer to work with us towards a resurrected family in the parish, armed with your skills to support the:

Resurrection of the Family

Hank Doeg
Contact Hank on 082 683 5681