

Voice from the Vicarage July 15th 2021

Dear All,

A generous Church is a healthy Church...

I believe that one of the signs of an authentic Christian community, and certainly necessary if a congregation is to grow is an evident generosity of spirit. This can be manifest in a number of ways. Forbearance with one another is one sign, as is thinking the best of one another. Checking complaint as a discipline is another alongside a low tolerance of gossip or collusion in criticism. Then there is generosity of time. While those who are responsible for the presentation of worship need to be efficient in their presentation, a congregation that is checking its watches or have too many folk who's love and enthusiasm are flagging for whatever reason, is unlikely to have much about it that attracts the curious or the wondering whom God might bring through the door.

Of course daily living presents different challenges and responsibilities to each of us, and these change as life goes on. How much time and commitment one is able to give to the life and witness of the Church in addition to our commitment to worship will also change. And of course a Christian can be contributing to the good of others in different contexts, and many do.

I remember a preacher I heard in my youth reflecting on the text, 'Where your treasure is your heart will be also' challenge the congregation with the question, "In the rhythms and activities of your life what are the things you are not willing to change or give up? Are worship and time spent in service of others on the list?" I squirmed, then thought 'Who does he think he is?', and then reflected on his challenge...

Another sign of generosity of spirit is folk using their talents for the glory of God and for the benefit of the Church. He will hate me mentioning it, but I thought of this

when our Jesse Lattarulo turned up this week with the gift of a bench he has made with his own hands to be placed where it might be of use. It's currently under the covered way outside the Bardin Centre. It's handsome! And all the more so because it has been given so freely and with love. Thank you Jesse.

Truth is, there are all sorts of quiet generosity going on in this parish. As parish priest I am fortunate to know many of them, but certainly not all.

Finally, there is of course financial generosity, without which no parish can be sustained save for one which has inherited incomes, which themselves reflect the generosity of folk in earlier generations. Some parishes in our diocese have considerable amounts of inherited wealth, (we don't!) though it has to be said that this does not necessarily translate into healthy contemporary congregations.

I have been so grateful that in the difficult days of the past year and more, the 'collection' has been sustained, and is even above our set budget. A good number make their donations electronically and that is a great boon to us as we plan for our life together. It's difficult for any

household to plan without knowledge of a 'guaranteed income'.

Coffee and Incense a heady mix....



A parishioner has volunteered the considerable sum needful for a machine that will allow us to serve decent coffee to Brunswick at 'The Lamb'. Of course we hope that the aroma of coffee will lead some of those who find their way into 264 Sydney Road to discover the more beautiful aroma of incense offered up to the Lord.. Coffee and incense....secular mingling with the sacred..our strategy for the future.

Thanks too to the person who has contributed the necessary funds for two of the necessary fridges in the café area and for the compliant flooring required for the kitchen and outer room at 264.

Jesse, of bench fame, is now turning his skills in a 264 direction, making the 'common table' which will sit near the window, and welcome those willing to turn off their phones and talk to whoever else happens to be there.

Very soon I will make available a list of 'opportunities for giving' as we seek to equip 'The Lamb' with all that is needful for the mission there. You might be able to help in some way.

MEANWHILE....WE MOVE INTO LOCKDOWN

As a result of the government's decision to have a snap lockdown there can be no public masses until the lockdown ends. Mass will be said today (Thursday) at 6.30 as usual.

Sunday Mass will therefore be online @ 10

The reserved sacrament can be collected from the vicarage tomorrow (Friday) from 3 p.m.—6 p.m. and on Saturday from 2 p.m.—6 p.m.

Keep the prayer going in your small corner!

NEXT FRIDAY, the 23rd, Jack Lindsay will be made deacon. Because of the lockdown and questions surrounding numbers etc going forward, sadly it is not now clear where the ordination will take place and how many may attend. I will send an email around when it becomes clearer. This lack of clarity about venue doesn't stop us praying for him as he waits upon the Lord for this renewing gift!

And finally... Can a bit of bitumen be beautiful? I say yes, if it will help folk get to a loo suitable for people with disabilities, or get to an ordinary loo. Soon if you are caught short in church you won't have far to go. Hooray!



'See' you online....again. *+Lindsay*

Entrance to 264's garden from the west side of the church...