

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE: 'Bringing Forth the Fruits of the Kingdom!'

21 / 22 November 2009

Dear Friends

As an Augustinian Parish, St James has a particular vision that reflects the charism of the Order which has ministered here since 1952. This charism includes building community, a spirit of friendship, interiority, and living the Christian life in a manner that is *'saintly and ordinary'*. I sense that we are inclined to sing certain hymns with great gusto, such as 'City of God', perhaps because that's the title of one of Augustine's most famous treatises.

On this great Feast of Christ the King, we are invited to reflect upon that great reality of the Kingdom of God, bringing forth God's Reign in our world – 'building' the City of God! In fact, we don't build anything; God does that! Our role is to help 'bring forth the fruits' of God's Kingdom. In this way we participate in the redemptive activity of Christ through sharing our personal gifts which are always for the community – no 'ego trips' allowed in this Kingdom!

Titles can be confusing and this feast of Christ the King can awaken our prejudices, especially if we're not keen on monarchies! God's Kingdom is about service and we are called to function in the Community where we are bonded together by our Baptism and part of the Human Family and the Church. We help 'bring forth the fruits' of the Kingdom here at St James, in the Archdiocese of Brisbane – not in Mareeba, South Yarra, Manly Vale or St Clair!

So, what does it mean to 'bring forth the fruits'? At the request of the Province's Parishes Commission, St James' Parish Pastoral Council spent time reflecting on what is important to us here, and I share with you the PPC's reflections (not in order of priority).

St James, as an Augustinian Parish, values:

The different gifts within the community and uses those gifts to build the community through the empowerment of individuals and groups within the Parish;

Good liturgy and works to foster liturgical reform by educating the community so they become inspired to see the Presence of Christ in their lives;

Faith formation through scripture especially by way of homilies which interpret scripture in a way that addresses the needs of today's Church;

The local community as part of the world wide Body of Christ through sharing the richness of Augustinian spirituality within the deanery, diocese and Australian context;

Working for justice and serving the community through our commitment to faith, prayer and practical assistance;

Styles of leadership characterised by collaboration, cooperation and participation in shared decision making;

A deep and inclusive sense of community with a special focus on young people, their hopes and active participation.

What are we doing to promote and develop these values? How would you and I answer?

Fr Dave