

# **PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE: 'Getting to Know Jesus!'**

30 / 31 January 2010

Dear Friends

This new year holds great promise for all of us with many opportunities to deepen our faith and particularly to come to know Jesus better. Here in Brisbane, there is the *PRAY 2010* conference in July and more immediately a series of talks by Archbishop Bathersby on 'Knowing Jesus' at different locations during Lent. As well, there is the Augustinian Lay Congress at Villanova in July.

During my recent holidays I was reflecting on my personal relationship with Jesus, prompted largely by a couple of excellent books – Travelling Light by Fr Daniel O'Leary and a unique novel by Wm Paul Young, The Shack. Both are very challenging, particularly the latter which is about our relationship with the Trinity and provided unexpected food for the soul.

Whether we realise it or not, each of us has a 'window' on the Gospel, a spirituality that hopefully helps us know Jesus better. Our personality colours how we pray and relate to God, how we see the Church, how we know and relate to Jesus. Just read the letters in *The Catholic Leader* or the comments on various stories in *Cath News* on the internet; at times you may wonder if we all belong to the same Church!

Some good examples of these 'windows' on the Gospel are the great spiritualities – Augustinian, Ignatian, Franciscan, Carmelite and various others – different ways of praying and coming to know Jesus. Last week, I spent a couple of days working with a Brigidine Sister at a staff in-service for St Augustine's College, Kyabram, where I was Pastor for 7 years. The staff were keen to explore the 'windows' of their Augustinian and Brigidine heritages as a means of defining goals and vision for the future. Whatever we do as a Christian community, school or parish, or as individuals, it all comes back to knowing Christ and we need to know our personal 'window'! I find the following quote from Daniel O'Leary (p 17f) very helpful:

*In the incarnation, God achieved that total enfleshing of Love in assuming the full humanity of the baby Jesus. Every cell, muscle, bone, fibre and drop of blood of the human body of the divine boy and adult, were the tangible and visible essence of God. To be touched by Jesus was to be touched by God. To hear and see him was to hear and see God. To be hugged and kissed by Jesus was to be hugged and kissed by God. To smell his breath was to smell the breath of God.*

With Jesus, there is always more, so let us nourish our hearts and explore the mystery of our own being through a deep desire to know Jesus better. Let us grasp the opportunities we are being given to do just that. I pose again the questions from last year:

**In what ways does Jesus give me 'life'?**

**How do I give 'life' to others, and how do they give 'life' to me?**

*Fr Dave*