

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE – EASTER - *'We DO the Liturgy!'*

8 / 9 May 2010

Dear Friends

Last Sunday's Parish Liturgy Gathering was very successful, with around 50 participating with great energy and interest. Our liturgical ministries are crucial to the life of the Parish and, here at St James, almost 100 people are regularly on our liturgy rosters, while many others assist in the areas of liturgy preparation, leading prayer, taking up the collection, decorating and cleaning, etc.

This workshop was the first in a variety of gatherings that we need to arrange for formation and training in liturgy, especially given the expected introduction of the new English translation of the Roman Missal in 2011. Already plans are being made to provide opportunities for all of us to increase our understanding of liturgy and make the transition when the changes occur next year.

Text changes in the Mass will require new musical settings too and Australian composers are hard at work. There will also be a revised Lectionary and the Parish will be purchasing new liturgical books, including a Book of the Gospels. Parishioners too will need suitable materials and preparation to make the transition.

We can always learn more about liturgy and gain fresh insights. The forthcoming *Pray 2010 Conference* in July includes several workshops on aspects of liturgy. It promises to be a very worthwhile experience for those taking part and I hope that many parishioners will register for at least a few sessions.

Let us remember that liturgy is never 'performance' but is always prayer. We 'do' the liturgy which involves many dimensions – sound and silence, speech and song, movement and stillness, proclamation and reflection, word and action. I share with you a brief reflection about 'Silence and Liturgical Prayer' (From Rite Notes, April 2010):

'Music breaks silence. Liturgical prayer incorporates it. Silence is an essential part of worship. We are encouraged to attend to the silences in the liturgy. Making quiet spaces does not mean viewing the assembly as an audience or outsiders of the prayer but promoting an interior spirit. This interior spirit brings people closer to the mystery being celebrated.'

The liturgy, particularly the Mass, both forms us and expresses who we are as the Church, the Body of Christ. Liturgy should move us in our prayer, in our daily living, in our relationship with Christ. It certainly moved St Augustine who wrote:

'I remember the tears I shed at the Church's song in the early days of my newly recovered faith, and how even today I am moved not by the singing as such but by the substance of what is being sung.' - The Confessions (Book 10, 50)