

5TH SUNDAY

LENT

YR B 2018

17 / 18

MARCH

The Parish of St James

Coorparoo.

An Augustinian Parish:

Archdiocese of Brisbane.



From the Priory Window

Since time began, parishioners, and visitors to the parish, have used the toilets in St James' School. Obviously, this is not satisfactory and, for a number of years the parish administration has been planning to construct toilets away from the school and close to the church.

Recently, our architect and heritage advisor presented a plan which seems feasible and which gained the approval of the Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Committee. It involves converting the rooms once used by the Priory live-in house-keeper into one unisex accessible toilet, one male ambulant and one female ambulant. Three toilets are the number required by Council for a church of our capacity.

To accomplish this, we will restore the veranda outside these rooms to its original state. Thus, easy access to the toilets will be direct from the veranda, which will give shelter from rain and sun as well as disabled access. The veranda will also give direct access to the Priory kitchen. The latter will be renovated at the same time as the veranda and toilets work (see our back page for the architect's plan).

Since 1913, the Priory has been home for the priests ministering in the parish. This will not be the case in the coming years. For several reasons, the clergy are gradually moving to reside elsewhere. These days, church leadership is promoting a separation of living and office/ministry space. Thus, in coming years the Priory will progressively be converted to a Parish Centre.

Fortunately, last year the parish received a bequest of money which will allow the foundational work to begin on preparing the Priory for this purpose. The Priory is a heritage building but one that is showing its age and in need of a substantial amount of repair. The steps to be taken in the near future include:

- Commissioning an electrical and roof inspection for audit and report
- Undertaking a termite assessment
- Causing a 'building condition' report (roof, windows, ceilings, plumbing, etc.)
- Preparing a submission for a grant of money via a 'Heritage Incentive Scheme Application' to the Brisbane City Council
- Commissioning a "Conservation Management Plan". The benefit of this for future work on the building is that it helps to identify the impact proposed changes may have and works that are likely to not materially affect the cultural heritage significance of the building. This will assist future applications to renovate the Priory into a Parish Centre.
- Seeking confirmation from Council that our starting work falls under the definition of "prescribed accepted development". If this is not successful, then there will be several other steps to take before any work on the toilets can begin.

An amount of money will eventually need to be spent on repairing the building and we will not, at first, see much change. However, once these works are completed, then the restoration of the Priory and its conversion should be of mission and pride for parishioners. This restoration is, though, some several years in the future.

However, we hope to begin the toilet project, the restoration of the rear lower veranda and the kitchen renovation within the next few months. All this with grateful thanks to the donor of the bequest.

Fr Peter osa Parish Administrator.