

A message for this coming Saturday 15 August

I notice in the weekly bulletin a meeting of the PAC this coming Monday. Chris, the chairman, has asked each of the parish organizations to give him an input at the meeting. I am not a member of any group as such except that I am one in the team of Eucharistic ministers. Do I then qualify to make a contribution to the PAC meeting? I am going to assume that I do.

I would like to suggest that we form a small group of about 6 people to look into how we can lead our church here at St Joseph's into more Christian outreach into our community. Pope Francis in his encyclical "Gaudium Evangelii," the Joy of the Gospel, in which he sets out the stall of his papacy for us all to view and respond to accordingly. If you have not read it, then I strongly recommend it to you. There is something in it that we could respond to here.

The reason I feel strongly about mission and evangelization it is what our faith is about and also the parlous state of Christianity in this country. How we can be more effective in our work and witness to our Blessed Lord is constantly in my prayers. In order to discern what our Lord wants of us we must be first and foremost be people of Christ, letting him grow in us so that it no longer us but Christ who lives in us. We have also remember the words of St Teresa of Avila that we are the eyes, the ears, the mouth and the mind of Christ in our world.

We are also reminded about our role as Christ's witnesses every time we come to Mass. At the end the priest tells us to go and announce the Gospel of the Lord or go in peace, glorifying the Lord by our life. This command reminds us that as we have been strengthened by God's word and have received the living Lord Jesus into our hearts and lives in the Blessed Sacrament, we now go out and take him into our everyday lives.

Perhaps there are others in our church who think the same as I do about the importance of mission and evangelization. It would hope my suggestion receives a mention in Monday's meeting. I do not want to tread on other people's toes, I know the SVP group include mission and evangelization in their pastoral work. Their experience would be valuable.

We must thank God for all those in our church here at St Joseph's who are reaching out to others in their catechetical work, in their concern for their neighbours. Some work in the Lyttleton Well, others in the Malvern Foodbank and other groups. The Catenian circle is a group of practising Catholic men who try and reach out to other men in the church in fellowship and encouragement in living the Christian life. A lot is already going on in our church in reaching out but we could perhaps do more. But we must not forget Fr Naz and his leadership and the love and concern he has for all of us. We are fortunate in having such a good priest. But he needs us to do our part in the life of the church.

Pray now for a good response to suggestions in Monday's meeting to lead our church forward in Christ's name.

Roger Watson