

A few words from the Vicarage ...



It was not without sadness that I made known my decision to retire in July, and I am much heartened by the warmth of the response and the number of good wishes received. Whilst it may have come as a surprise to most, the simple fact is that it is the right time to go.

As I wrote recently in the *Wayside Pulpit* column in the *Lytham St Annes Express*, however much we may wish it otherwise, none of us is indispensable. Indeed, time marches on and waits for no one - so, it is now time for me to 'hang up my chasuble' and make room for a new priest to help guide the parish forward.

I am hugely grateful to this church family for these last (almost seven) years, and together, I believe, we have achieved much - although complacency is always to be avoided for there is still much to be done ... I know that you will carry on with what is needed.

Once again, Lent, Holy Week and Easter have been a real joy as we journeyed together towards Calvary and beyond - to the glory of the Risen Christ on Easter Day. I was glad to share this journey with you again and to have your support along the way - it has provided many cherished memories - we even had time to have fun together at the vicarage on Good Friday as we shared fellowship ... and hot cross buns! Indeed, it was our best turn out for this event

At our Annual Parochial Church Meeting, we laid the firm foundations for the future, by re-electing two excellent churchwardens and filling the vacancies in PCC and Deanery Synod. In this current management team, you have one of the strongest and most committed groups with whom it has ever been my privilege and pleasure to work. I am confident that, as we work together now over the next three months, planning for the vacancy, you may be assured of 'business as usual'.

I hope and pray that you will all take this opportunity to work together for the future, look at what are your priorities, re-visit your Mission Action Plan, prune what needs pruning and cultivate new growth. This will be a time of change, no doubt, but we need never fear change if we engage with it, embrace it and ensure that it will improve upon what we have at present.

Remember that this is **YOUR** parish and its success will rely heavily upon **YOU** and the commitment **YOU** are prepared to make with **YOUR** time, skills and energy. As has been stressed before in dealing with the parish budget, finance also requires **YOUR** commitment and support - without that support and without tight controls, the financial stability of the parish will forever give cause for concern. This is not something to be left to one side - it requires constant vigilance and attention. This is an area in which **YOUR** management team is particularly skilled - but the PCC members rely upon **YOU** to support them in their work.

The countdown may have begun for my departure - but I am still here and still serving - and loving every minute of it!

God bless you all,
your Vicar,

Fr D.