

## Scripture ...

### READING: Luke 2:8-14

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## A time for quiet reflection

*How is the good news evidenced in your life?*

*In what areas of your life and ministry are you in need of good news?*

**A time of silence can be followed with spontaneous prayers of the faithful.**

**Sung response:**

*E te Ariki, whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou*

Use this prayer in a group which is discerning how to implement Fit for Mission, or meeting in Advent. Alternatively it can be used as a private reflection

## A Psalm of Commissioning for Mission

- Voice 1 The harvest is ready. Whom shall I send?
- All **Send me, O God, I am ready to serve You all the days of my life.**
- Voice 1 Go into the workplace and into the streets and reveal God's saving Spirit through the quality of your life.
- Voice 2 The world is waiting. Whom shall I send?
- All **Send me, O God, I am ready to speak of You, all the days of my life.**
- Voice 2 Preach the Good News by your actions: heal, help, teach, touch, be of good spirit in good times and bad times, and live for the glory of God.
- Voice 1 The world is hungry. Whom shall I send?
- All **Send me, O God, I am ready to nourish, all the days of my life.**
- Voice 1 Feed the hungry of body and spirit, break the bread of compassion, distribute the fragments of hope, and be fed by the Word within you.
- Voice 2 The vineyard is ready. Whom shall I send?
- All **Send me, O God, I am ready to work for You, all the days of my life.**
- Voice 2 Enter into and love the mission and your many ministries, labour for justice, lobby for peace, and may you find contentment in the wages of commitment when the long hard day is done.
- All **Amen! Thanks be to God.**



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

## Fit For Mission Takatū Ki Te Mau I Te Rongo Pai

*Are we ready to be Christians full time, showing our commitment by word and deed?*

*Dec 2014 Newsletter*

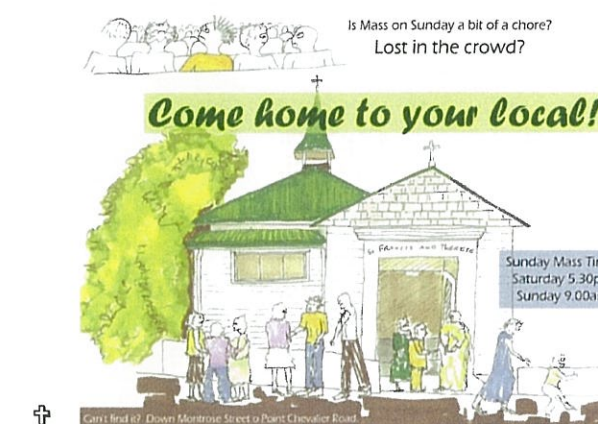
*Pope Francis*

**As we come to the close of 2014, we ask you all to remember you are still on mission during the holidays. Remember to keep Christ in Christmas – if you send cards, make them Christian ones, if you send e-cards, make them Christian ones. If you decorate your house, make sure there is a crib among the decorations. If you decorate your table, put a Christmas Blessing on your candles, or serviettes. Remember Christ is the reason for the Season. We are celebrating the birth of Jesus.**

### How parishes and communities are getting Fit For Mission!

#### Point Chevalier Parish is doing a leaflet drop:

✠ A leaflet drop to the local community is being planned in the hope of awakening "sleeping Catholics". It is to be postcard size, hand delivered by a PPC members and volunteers.



#### Massey Fit for Mission

We have developed two groups: a support group for the elderly and a social and hospitality group. Enquiry evenings were organised for Catholics and non-Catholics, with a notice in the local paper; The Don Bosco youth group is also developing a Fit For Mission plan based on the 4 priorities in Bishop Pat's Pastoral Plan:

Reaching those outside our community

- ✠ Assisting families facing difficulties: recent blanket, can & clothing drive; ongoing outreach by making it an annual winter appeal
- ✠ Collaborating with existing organisations to help those in need: Auckland City Mission, St Vincent De Paul's, women's refuge, Sister Maureen (migrant & refugee families) and supporting halfway houses
- ✠ Currently working with Liston College through Vinnies Youth, with a plan to add St Dominic's



## **St Andrew's Parish – Tuakau**

The parish continues to be heavily involved in the organising of the passion play to be performed prior to Easter next year at Villa Maria. This is the main focus for the next few months.

## **St Patrick's, Pukekohe**

"New Horizons" Guest speaker Christine Bell gave a presentation to Men's group and Catholic Women's League about the desire to establish a community for young men with addictions. The Sth Auck Franklin district looks to be an ideal place to start such a venture.

## **St Francis of Assisi Thames:**

As well as inviting the Thames parishioners to our Golf-BBQ social evening we extended an invitation to the Co-operating parish. On the last fifth Sunday of the month we had a combined social with them at their venue. We are celebrating the first year of our local community garden where people can donate plants but also have access to fruit and veggies.

## **St Joseph's, Takapuna**

Fit For Mission is raised at most Sunday Masses with a feature item in every parish news letter. Our new parish web site [www.takapunacatholic.org.nz](http://www.takapunacatholic.org.nz) features 'Fit For Mission' on its home page. There will be a WELCOME sign featuring Pope Francis placed in front of St. Joseph's, St. Luke's & St. Vincent (Milford). These signs are planned to be updated every 3-4 months.

**East Coast Bays** has two "community outreach" programmes:

A Weekly Play Group (school term) run by volunteers,

"Happy Hour" for the elderly, held fortnightly on Wednesday from 2.00 – 3.30 pm; with bingo, sing along and afternoon tea. Organised by volunteers and home baking supplied by volunteers.

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**Papakura: Season of Creation:** This began with the Stations of Creation being prayed outside under the trees before all masses on weekend of 6/7th September. The congregations were encouraged to grow something and seed potatoes were offered to be taken home and planted. A series of three Sunday evening services with guest speakers occurred shared at the churches of the Anglicans, Methodists and at St Mary's.

A series of walks occurred around the Papakura and surrounds suburbs the invitation was to 'walk more, drive less, [the slogan continued] say no to plastic, plant a garden, turn more switches off, bake bread, become better informed, pray for wisdom.'

## **Cathedral: Fit for Mission**

Two Fit For Mission evenings were held in September calling for ideas to implement the plan in the parish and to energise people as missionaries. The key concepts driving the parish are 'beauty and hospitality'. Beauty in worship and in place, and hospitality in relationship with the Bishop, the diocese, the church and the community at large; being more welcoming and being near to people.

**Grey Lynn Youth** rocked in their new red Fit for Mission t-shirts. FFM has been wholeheartedly embraced in the parish. The Fit For Mission Leadership Team boasts 23 members, including young people, was blessed by Bishop Pat on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October, the day the parish celebrated its centenary. The team has met for FFM leadership training and has developed a 5 year FFM plan for the parish. The first year will focus on strengthening families, spiritual development within families and issues confronting families like alcohol, drugs, poverty.



## **Sacred Heart Parish, Ponsonby**

Fr. Robert Steele has renamed his pastoral council Parish Mission Council in keeping with Fit for Mission. The focus is to have people make the conscientious change in their lives to be missionary people and reach out. His two best parish resources are 1) "the contemplative group", a group of daily communicants and committed volunteers, and 2) the school. Amongst other tasks, the contemplative group is gently working on inviting lapsed Catholics back.

The Tongan Youth/Young Adults Group prepared food plates and served at Auckland City Mission. In October they raised funds to cover costs of the programmes they will do over the year.

Another outreach initiative was to make activity packs for children attending the various local medical centres.

**St Mary's, Mt Albert** PPC met around how we can refocus and get back on track with ideas to be "Fit for Mission". A suggestion was to look at the groups who had received grants from the Catholic Caring Foundation to see if we could support local groups. Rest home visiting was also suggested.

## **Christ the King Owairaka**

Fit for Mission Activities: Our social justice animators came back from a diocesan meeting fired with Ideas of how to become FFM emissaries. They intend to start on a regional level with the participation of Parishes in the Central region. The Caring Committee once again organised another visit to the Glenburn Rest Home on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

**Samoan community** Fit for mission messages and encouragement are delivered every first Sunday at the Malaeola centre in Mangere. Fr Michael makes sure that this is included in the agenda.

## **Chinese Community**

*Fit for Mission* 50 volunteers have registered for love and care action. This year we focused on the transportation to bring more **Chinese** parishioners to our church situated at Herne Bay and visit the poor to distribute food parcels. Fun day for elderly will be scheduled around Chinese New Year, January 2015.

**St Pius Xth Clover Park** The PPC are interested in coordinating with Holy Cross Papatoetoe and St John Evangelist Otara to organize a "Fit for mission" gathering of all Parishioners from each of the three Parishes. This is in the discussion stages.

**Warkworth.** The Parish is involved in a number of outreach projects especially leading up to Christmas such as: Parish Float in the Christmas Parade / Food Bank distribution / visiting home bound



## **Religious Men**

A group prayer at a gathering of religious men was offered and we focused on our identity as religious in the Church and in sharing our unique charisms to promote and contribute to "Fit For Mission" within the various ministries to which we are engaged.

## **Maria Assumpta Beachhaven**

The SVP of the parish is supporting two schools in Beachhaven/Birkdale and supplies them with lunches.

## *Budgeting Seminar for Seniors*

In September our parish hosted a seminar on budgeting focusing on senior citizens. This event drew some people from outside our parish.

**Committees in the J& P commission** are very active with the roles they carry out, that is, dealing with social justice matters. All of these feature the Fit for mission plan.

## **Youth to the fore**

- In the Regional programme "Called to Action" young people from West Auckland looked at the local issues of graffiti, self-image and bullying. They painted out graffiti on walls in West Auckland, baked treats for the homeless that go to City Mission and created Christmas decorations for Monte Cecilia.



**Ta'imua** are planning an Advent Fit for Mission concert, inviting other church groups to join with them

## **Tongan community**

During the past 3 months, leaders and members in each Tongan community have been busy visiting the sick people in our communities. Also members who have been away for too long and have drifted away.

