



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?

May 2015 Newsletter www.cdafitformission.weebly.com

Pope Francis

FIT FOR MISSION EASTER WALKS

Lent is over and we are now into the Easter Season or Paschal time. Over the Triduum many parishes witnessed to the community with processions of the cross around the streets.

That was a great opportunity to show the wider community what the real meaning of Easter is.

However there were as many different ways of these Good Friday walks as there were parishes. Here are some stories with pictures of the events.

Maria Assumpta Beachhaven

Some years ago a parishioner, one who had come through the RCIA had the idea of a community and ecumenical way of the cross.

Malcolm Steedman persuaded the parish priest and went with him to the ministers' association meeting where the idea was embraced. The Beachhaven/Birkdale churches are situated on a ring road with most of the churches on that main road. The format was simple, begin at one church, read a Scripture passage from the start of the passion narrative, have a brief reflection on that from the host pastor, a prayer, perhaps a hymn and then walk along to the next church, carrying a cross. It of course wasn't that simple – which passages were to be read, which churches would participate, what about sound? What about traffic? What about catering for those who



couldn't walk the whole distance? So Malcolm and his parish got busy, Inveigled the then North Shore City Council into lending a portable sound system which could be carried from one venue to the next: Birkenhead Bus Co. came to the party with a bus, which one of the parishioner bus drivers drove, so that the elderly and young parents with kids could ride some or all of the way between stations; the local parish. Mostly the youth group provided wardens, with cones and high viz vests. The weather has been kind which is just as well as the little services take place outside the churches in full view of the road so that people can join in. The Baptist church was where the walk ended and they provided hot cross buns

and drinks at the last station. And so it has continued and grown over the last few years – with new churches and new pastors joining, some shifting, others changing congregations. Methodist, Korean, Anglican, Catholic, Bible Chapel, Grace Church, various evangelical churches and the Baptist church. The Coptic Church observes Easter at a different time but chose to mark the walk by ringing their bells as the procession passed by its premises. It is now a local institution and says to the locals – this is what Easter is all about; Christians together witnessing to the crucifixion and resurrection – a real *Fit For Mission* event.

Malcolm has been inspired to go on to join an ecumenical healing ministry, and relationships among the local churches have been greatly enriched by this event.

St Mary’s, Mt Albert

In this parish the group of women who got together to organise the World Day of Prayer, (a women’s day held on the first Friday of March annually) , decided that they should hold an ecumenical way of the Cross too. They involved the ministers’ association and planned a way of the cross going into each church where a little drama is enacted, - e.g. the Agony in the Garden, the Trial by Pilate, often by the various youth groups. Various churches mark it in different ways, with the Methodist choir singing strongly. This year the Salvation Army provided the closing morning tea. Again, it is a public event around the streets of Mt Albert with St Luke’s Anglican Church giving a strong lead, and has been going for about eight years.

St Francis & All Souls, Devonport

This custom began many moons ago under Dr Terry but fell away. However it has been going again now for the past twenty years, organised by the various Christian churches, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, the Light Church and Catholics. People assemble in the Windsor reserve at the foot of Mt Victoria and walk up the

hill carrying a large cross, stopping at stages on the way for a Scripture reading, a prayer and a hymn. The procession ends at the summit of Mt Victoria. There are at least 300 people who take part every year.

Our Lady of Lourdes, Glen Eden

Glen Eden parish, as part of the *Fit For Mission* plan have formed a group of Pacific wardens who voluntarily patrol the shopping centre on late nights. This group also helps out at local events as a service to the community.



So their way of the cross which just included Catholic parishioners made use of their own wardens to control the hundreds who turned out to walk the way of the cross around **Glen Eden**.



Mangere parishes: Ss Therese & Anthony.

This is another parish which has a mountain to walk up. The crowd gathers, (Catholics and other churches) at the gates of the Mangere Mountain domain at 9am. There is a Maori powhiri there at the entrance and then the group processes up the mountain stopping at various stages for a reading, a short dramatic presentation, usually by a youth group, and follows Christ carrying the cross

(changing carriers) until they reach the top where the crucifixion is enacted, and the taking down of Jesus' body, laid in his mother's arms. People can then come up and touch the shroud covering Jesus. This year about 3000 people took part in the walk.

Our Lady of the Assumption, Onehunga

Because the procession has got so big last year those at the back cannot hear what those at the front are saying or singing, it was decided to take it off the streets and just walk around the large Catholic church property in Onehunga. It is opposite a shopping centre so is visible to the shoppers.



The group carries out similar actions as the other groups with various stops/stations at which Scripture is read and enacted, a cross is carried and prayers and hymns are sung.



Public ways of the Cross are ideal *Fit For Mission* events, even more so when they involve planning and organising with other churches and witnessing in public streets. Start planning now for next year.

And of course the big one in the city– now

organised by **Tertiary Chaplaincy**, formerly organised by the seminary students. It is called the Stations of the Cross and began at Albert Park travelled along Princes Street past McLaurin Chapel around Waterloo Quadrant, back to the University, down past AUT to Aotea Sq.



It then processed along **Queen Street to Wyndham Street**, up to St Pat's Cathedral where it concluded. Because it was using public streets, the traffic police have to be involved and a large sound system is used. Voluntary wardens are also used, and a big cross is carried by different groups between the different stations where Scripture readings and reflections are proclaimed and heard.



Don't just keep them as a Catholic event – be open to wider involvement, and public visibility.

Come Holy Spirit and show us what is true

In a world of great wealth
where many go hungry
and fortunes are won and lost
by trading in money,

Come Holy Spirit, and show us what is true



Queue outside Auckland City mission awaiting food parcels.

In a world of great knowledge
where many die in ignorance
and every piece of information
has a price in the market place.

Come Holy Spirit, and show us what is true

In a world of easy communication
where words leap between continents
and we expect to see a picture
to illustrate each item of news

Come, Holy Spirit, and show us what is true

In a Church which speaks a thousand accents,
divided over doctrine, creed and ministry
more anxious for itself than for the Gospel

Come, Holy Spirit, and show us what is true

In a Church touched by the flame of Pentecost
moved to generous sacrifice and costly love,
interpreting the will of God with new insight

Come Holy Spirit, and show us what is true

*Living God's Justice. Roundtable of Diocesan Social Action Directors
St Anthony Messenger Press*

Visit the website

www.cdafitformission.weebly.com

for the PowerPoint on how to choose a
parish project as well as other resources

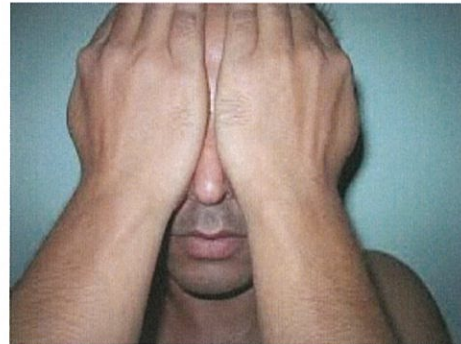
Spirit of God

Spirit of God

You are the breath of creation,
The wind of change that blows
through our lives

Opening us up to new dreams and
new hopes,
new life in Jesus Christ.

Forgive us our closed minds
which barricade themselves
against new ideas; preferring the past
to what you might want to through us tomorrow
What new ideas am I against?



Forgive our closed eyes
which fail to see the needs of our world,
blind to the opportunities of service and love
***What opportunities could we as a parish
or group take up?***

Forgive our closed hands
which clutch our gifts and our wealth
for our own use alone.

***What did I buy this week
that I didn't need?***

Forgive us our closed hearts
which limit our affection to ourselves.

All: Spirit of new life

**Forgive us and break down
the prison walls of our own selfishness,
that we might be open to your love
and open for the service of your world,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord AMEN**

