

## Increase our faith: unlock the potential

At the heart of every Christian action is the desire to bring forth the love of God into the lives of those we meet. One of the most beautiful ways of appreciating this is by recognising the sacramental presence of Jesus working in us and along side us as we go about doing our daily tasks. Every aspect of our lives has in some way, been touched by God, and this connection manifests itself by guiding our minds towards him and motivating our actions to express him. Faith then is not a material or physical thing or commodity that functions in any mechanical way, offering me rewards for the things I do, but rather faith is that mystery by which in and through the sacraments I am brought to the knowledge that I am loved and redeemed in spite of the things I so often fail to do. The sacraments open our minds to God and at the same time open our hearts to each other.

To know and understand that God loves us is to enter into the mystery of the Trinity. In baptism we are born into the Trinitarian love of Father, Son and Spirit which as we grow binds us in union with the Godhead. We are called to express this love through our priestly, prophetic and royal service, offered in the way that Christ himself offers it. These three aspects of our discipleship are present in our lives as the building blocks of our sacramental witness. We are priests as we minister our love for one another as Christ calls us to. We are prophets as we proclaim his gospel by living out the values that the gospel teaches us. We are regal as we follow his example of diaconal service. Each one of these three elements embodies a moment of encounter with the reality of God's grace present and active in the world.

We are challenged every day to be open to this reality, and every day the challenge becomes harder and harder as our encounter with the secular threatens to undermine our encounter with the sacred. It can be so easy to lose sight and let go of our relationship with God as the world offers us its rewards based not on notions of loving service or gospel values, but rather on those of personal gain and self achievement. As such we need to come to the sacraments to ground us in Christ. We need to revisit them to re-set the compass point once more to direct our minds towards God and our hearts towards each other. The gospel today has the disciples calling on Jesus to "increase our faith" and Jesus gives them a salient reminder of what faith is about. He tells them that faith is about unlocking the potential that rests in each one of us as baptised Christians. The potential to change the world and turn its values upside down, in other words, it is about making present the kingdom of God here on earth.

Well, we have to start where we are, and we are in Wollaton. In St Thomas More Parish considering responding to the needs of our community, a number of parishioners have suggested the possibility of providing a visiting and support service within our parish. Throughout our lives occasions of crisis, illness and losses of all kinds can occur leaving us and our carers vulnerable, sometimes lonely and needing support. Perhaps we can seek to support each other at these times in a little more organised way. It doesn't necessarily mean joining or re-starting the SVP, but it will need a real commitment from us, the parishioners if it is going to succeed. I think it is a tremendous idea which will very visibly express our sacramental witness to our calling: *we are merely servants; we have done no more than our duty.*