

## **The Rector's Report for 2020** *(issued January 2021)*

Dear friends

We have so many things to learn and re-learn in this lifetime, individually and as a community. The pattern of **the Paschal Mystery**, of Christ's death and resurrection, the pattern of dying leading to rising, of an ending leading to a new beginning, **is foundational to the meaning of our lives, and is always with us.**

At this time last year, I had reported how we had grown in unprecedented ways in 2019, and now, **in 2020 and 2021, we find ourselves growing in different ways, and asking different questions**, and re-aligning what it means to do ministry in our context. In 2020, we have all been carried through a downward trajectory into suffering and loss, and a global human trauma of a pandemic that has claimed so many lives, and has rightly claimed our most urgent and immediate attention, at the same time as urgent ecological and political crises continue to abound around us.

Suddenly, reading the Psalms took on a new and deeper dimension, not just as a liturgical act or a faithful form of prayer, but also as a psychological and spiritual commentary on the world. "Your word is a lamp for my feet, and a light upon my path" (Ps 119.105).

- 1) **At our last annual meeting in February 2020, we rolled out and embraced our program *Letting Our Light Shine*.** The fundamental encapsulating image for the goal of our program is that of **a lighthouse, shining its light across troubled waters**. This beacon of light, representing the implementation of our parish's expression of and participation in our diocesan *Transforming Futures* program, is our commitment to providing a light of clarity, wisdom, and compassion, for others to navigate by. It is not only there to show the rocks that are above the surface, but also to steer us in the face of the dangers that lie underneath the surface of the deep. The danger of collapse in our health care systems and in our ecological systems, during 2020 and beyond, is well above the surface in our consciousness. The mental health distress, upended lives, business and employment recalibration, loneliness and confusion, are often more easily hidden from sight, yet every bit as real in the daily experience of many.
- 2) **We have been called upon this year to adjust everything in our parish ministry and partnerships** that depends on in-person gatherings, and find ways to **increase our online presence**. All our signature parish events were put on hold or redefined, and our hoped-for weekend celebration in June with Archbishop

Mark MacDonald and our Coast Salish artists and historians Wade and Mary Baker, *All Our Relations*, was necessarily cancelled. Thank you for everyone's patient and gradual acceptance of a new reality.

- 3) One of the further adjustments has been the way that **our youth mentoring and employment program** has been able to bridge the gap very productively for a wide range of our ministries. As an expression of Franciscan initiative, and with a relationship to our *Spirituality Beyond Borders* program, I have written up a separate report for 2020 on **our youth program, the *Friends of Clare and Francis***.
- 4) Another key element this year in redefining our ministry, with the closure of our buildings for reasons of public health and safety, has been our **determination to keep our kitchen open** for our ecumenical teams of volunteers to come in **daily to provide meals for delivery downtown to those facing homelessness** and the issues that surround homelessness. Once again, this has been a full-orbed commitment on the part of all our staff to an essential service, under Christine's skilled leadership and her continuing initiative, to work with all levels of government as well as with volunteers to provide a new context for how we can best serve the marginalized populations of our local Oceanside community. **A tremendous thank you is particularly due to Christine, Mandy, Perry, and Kathy.**
- 5) At the end of the year, we were glad to **continue to grow our ministry team** in an organic way **by welcoming Dr Jane Clelland**, a doctor specializing in opioids and addictions, to continue her process of discernment towards the ministry of a **vocational deacon**, within the context of our parish ministry. Jane comes to us with degrees both in medicine and in theology, and has been working as part of our OHEARTS ecumenical response team both at a board level and at the ground level of treatment.

***Growing Through Teamwork***, as our foundational program for leadership and staffing in Parksville, is intended to be about diversity, sharing of gifts, and adaptability, and I am grateful that the call upon us all to be adaptable has found us in a personnel position where no one person is left stranded to do all the work and decision-making during a time of ongoing crisis. I am so grateful for the skilled and committed work of everyone on our staff, and the countless volunteer hours of our leadership team and council, that go on behind the scenes, even when it is so difficult for us to meet together in person.

One important corollary and reminder for us about the diverse leadership of our ministry is that **everyone on our team works on a part-time basis** in terms of time commitments and remuneration, with multiple levels of commitment and involvement. In that respect, 2020 for me personally also marks the first time in 6 years of travelling to and attending services at Holy Trinity, Madeira, that I have now completed the process begun several years ago for gaining an additional identity - officiating and assisting within the *Diocese of Europe*. This is a double-identity that I carry with me into the future as an intentional plan – *Spirituality Beyond Borders* in an additional sense of that word!

In all, we have been through a year of grieving and of adjusting –

- **lamenting our losses**
- **learning new ways to live** and to care for one another
- **longing for a healthier kind of “new normal”**

– longing for a newer normal that leaves behind the errors of our “old” normal, and is kinder to our diverse and fragile planet as well as to our common humanity.

Your sincere friend, priest, and pastor,



Andrew +

The Rev. Andrew Twiddy, Rector & Incumbent

Epiphany, 2021