

Canon Anthony Charlton thoughts on the past year:

What has dominated my year obviously has been my stroke that happened on 13th January this year. After a month in hospital some excellent physiotherapy and after care, I was able to return to parish work after Easter. I would like to thank you all for the prayers, cards and all your thoughtfulness. I now have to deal with fatigue and find I don't have the same stamina as before. I try to have a rest every afternoon which helps.

I would especially like to thank Fr Arbo who was appointed here last August and very ably stepped in to run things while I was ill. He has done a great job. In March, Bishop Paul Hendricks asked if we would have Fr Tahir Aziz to stay with us and who is who is doing a masters in Scripture at Heythrop College. He hopes to finish this in January. I would also want to thank all those who help to run this parish especially our parish administrator Mrs. Elaine Intranova who is constantly cheerful and welcoming and enables things to run smoothly. There are many who give their services willingly and freely. I am thinking of all those on the various committees, the finance committee chair by Andrew Perks, the liturgy committee chaired by Jacque Lambert, the maintenance committee and the sacramental preparation groups.

An essential part of family life is the sacramental life. We have a wonderful team of baptism catechists led by Kate Kelk who help parents in their preparation for their Child's baptism. Then there are the First communion and first reconciliation catechists led by Una Keely and Cindy Owen who have done a great job this last year is preparing over 60 children. Confirmation was again celebrated on the eve of Pentecost and we had 43 Young people. Recruiting catechists for confirmation is never easy and I would like to thank all those who stood up to the plate led this year by Andrew Richardson. Al and Trudy have again done a great job running the Deanery programme of marriage preparation. It was a great joy to have adults baptised and received into full Communion this last Easter. A big thank you to Fiona Perks and her team for journeying with them. We are blessed to have a good youth group that has been going for several years now and I would like to thank all those adults involved who give of their time so generously. Today no parish can function properly with a proper and efficient system to CRB checking all volunteers. Our thanks go to the great work that Monica Tett has done over the years to enable this parish to be in the forefront of good practice when it comes to safeguarding children. This year Kate Kelk has agreed to help and support her, for which I am very grateful.

The heart of our life is the celebration of Mass. I would like to thank all those who are Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and Servers for their contribution to a worthy celebration. Well done to the choir and organists who enhance our singing and help us to pray twice over. We mustn't forget all those behind the scenes who clean the church and prepare and work in the sacristy.

Just before I arrived ten years ago, one of the major innovations initiated by the parish was the establishment of Noah's Ark pre-school. They celebrated ten years with a barbecue earlier in the summer. They have experienced greater demand from the regulating authority regarding the running of the nursery and the parish has been very happy to try and help them comply with new legislation. During the summer some major work was undertaken and paid for by Noah's Ark. We have agreed to changes in the kitchen area of

the bungalow and putting a new toilet where the old kitchen was. Noah's ark is a great asset to parish life any we hope to be able to fund new flooring in the next financial year for the main building.

Another project that has been slowly taking shape in the building of a memorial chapel. We commissioned an icon that has been completed by Ian Knowles and are awaiting the final go ahead from the diocese before we start structural work.

I would also like to thank Neil Goodman, Andrew Richardson and Tony Schwartz for all their work in enabling us to have a completely new website. It is the bee's knees!

Finally I would like to thank the Syro Malabar community that are very much part of our parish. We are very happy to help them have their monthly Mass and also now their weekly catechetical sessions on a Saturday morning.

September 14th 2010

Feast of the Triumph of the Cross