

Only God gives growth

1 Corinthian 3:6-9

*I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labour of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.*

As I was beginning to think about my report this year to our Annual General Meeting, I received Liz Clark's resignation letter. Liz has been on the staff for many years now. She has been a great support to me especially when I was new to the whole Australian scene and parish work, first as a Parish Secretary and later as a Pastoral Associate. I'll miss her; her leaving reminds me of how our parishes continue to change and grow with the leaving and moving in of new parishioners and staff. We thank Liz for her generous contribution to our parish life and wish her well in retirement. I am sure God has another project for her.

The building, refurbishment and maintenance works are going on and we are in the advance stage of completion. Work for our St Francis Xavier church will begin soon. We have received approval from the bishop and are waiting for the architect to finalise details for the new gathering place. The delay has been caused by the refurbishment work in the school. At St Clare's, maintenance work and painting are taking place at the parish centre and it should be completed by the end of this month. Then we have to start the conversation for planning and refurbishment of the church. By the end of this year or early next year we should have refurbished most of our buildings. Thank you to all our staff and committees for their guidance and support.

The ongoing building work together with Fr Ben's and Fr Bob's illness last year sapped much of my energy, yet we managed to care for our parishioners. Thank you to all who work and care for our parishes and to all parishioners for your generous contribution, financially, of time, energy, leadership and ideas. Thank you for your patience and cooperation in putting up with all the inconvenience of the building work.

The challenge for us in 2010 -2011 is to organise and use our resources well; we need to start rethinking, planning and implementing strategies that will help build our faith communities. Liturgy, pastoral care, faith development and community building need a boost and some new ideas.

We face the future together as two parish communities, trusting in Providence.

Fr Anthoni Selvaraj ofm