

A Message of Thanks

As we reflect on the past year, Fr. Bobby and I wish to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributes to the life and mission of our Parish. Your generosity, commitment, and involvement ensure that our Parish remains a vibrant, welcoming, and faith-filled community.

We extend special thanks to those who work quietly but tirelessly behind the scenes to support the daily running of our Parish. We are truly blessed with a well-organised Parish office and a high standard of church maintenance. The Parish shop continues to be a cornerstone of Parish life, thanks to the creativity and dedication of those who keep it running.

We are also deeply grateful to the Cemetery Committee and those who care for our graveyard, which is always beautifully maintained and provides comfort to parishioners remembering loved ones. We also really appreciate the hard work that our volunteers put into tidying and caring for our Parish car park.

We are very grateful to our sacristans and all those who assist them. Their careful preparation ensures that our liturgies run smoothly. We are delighted to welcome Bernard Morgan as the new sacristan in St Joseph and St Benildus.

We also thank the collectors and counters who faithfully serve each week. Darragh, our youngest collector, is a joyful sign of the next generation's engagement in Parish life. We are grateful to Eoghan and all TY students who bring fresh energy and enthusiasm to the Parish. We deeply appreciate everyone involved in supporting their participation in Parish life, and we look forward with hope to the development of a Parish Youth Ministry.

We thank the Syro Malabar Catholic Church community for their generous support of our Parish initiatives, bringing together adults and children in service and fellowship.

We also acknowledge the important work of the Altar Society, flower arrangers, and all who clean and care for church furnishings, decorations, and displays throughout the year.

We are grateful to our liturgical ministries, including choirs, musicians and cantors, liturgy ministry, Eucharistic Ministers, Ministers of the Word, and all the ministers who help at Mass. A special word of thanks to Chris, Loretta, and the TY students who built our crib. Our Safeguarding Committee continues to ensure that all safeguarding standards are upheld.

The Children's Liturgy Group does excellent work to engage the children of the Parish in a meaningful way in Sunday morning Mass. We also express our sincere thanks to the Altar Servers and their families, and coordinators - whose commitment and reverence greatly enhance our liturgical celebrations.

We thank the Funeral Ministry Team for their compassion and support to bereaved families.

In faith formation and outreach, we are grateful to all those involved in preparing people for the sacraments, as well as those who support Baptism preparation, Alpha, Connect, youth and adult faith initiatives, and to our Parish catechist Olive for her dedication in preparing children for the sacraments and supporting their families. We also acknowledge the Lectio Divina Group, Night Prayer Group, Legion of Mary, Blessed Sacrament Adoration, and the Parish Tarsus Scripture Group.

A significant dimension of our outreach programme is of course the Ishiara Partnership. Our committee does great work to support and develop our Partner Parish in Ishiara. At home, we have our local

conference of the St Vincent De Paul Society who reach out with great compassion to support the less fortunate in our community.

We would like to acknowledge the work done by the Welcoming Committee and St Mary's Parish Committee. Special appreciation goes to those who organise coffee mornings, friendship lunches, Parish activities, and other initiatives that strengthen the bonds within our community in Newtown and Ballygunner and promote a spirit of welcome and belonging. We also thank the IT and Communications Ministry for strengthening Parish connections through the newsletter, website, and technology.

We are deeply appreciative of the guidance and leadership provided by the Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Leadership Team, Finance Council, and Maintenance/Development Committee. Their commitment supports both the present life and future development of the Parish.

We also thank our envelope distributors for their faithful service throughout the year.

This year, we said goodbye to Maria as a Parish secretary. We are grateful for her excellent service in administrative work in the Parish. Thanks also to all who have supported secretarial work since Maria finished.

We also said farewell to Fr. Liddane, who passed away last January. Fr. Liddane's presence, guidance, and pastoral care left a lasting impact on our Parish community. We remember with gratitude his dedication to our Parish and the many ways he enriched our faith life. His memory continues to inspire us to serve one another with the same compassion and commitment that he always showed.

The Eco Awareness and Litter Pickers' groups are a very important part of our Parish life as the mission of the Church focuses more and more on environmental protection.

As we look ahead to the New Year, may we continue in a spirit of gratitude, unity, and shared responsibility. We wish you and your families a peaceful and blessed year ahead.

Fr. Liam