



## *Reflections of the pastor after three months*

The parishioners at St Ignatius have been truly warm in their welcome of me. In many ways you have made my advent almost like a home coming. The entire season of Lent was a good spiritual journey praying and experiencing with you the central mystery of our faith, the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. But it also was a time for me to become more aware of the complexity of our parish community, to get to know many of you, and to begin to appreciate the care you have for your community. There are so many who are giving their talents and time to enable us to worship well and to minister not only to our own parish members but to others in our broader community. Many may not be aware that we have a solid worship group who by their daily attendance at Mass support all the members of the body of Christ at St. Ignatius. I have enjoyed being a part of this community too.

Three things I have noted already in this short time with you.

First, there are many committed and dedicated parishioners who are faithful to serving the community. Some have been doing that for many many years. Their generosity is astounding. I have also noticed there is some eagerness of some parishioners to become more involved in ministry at the parish and there is also in some a reluctance to become involved (and there are, no doubt, many valid reasons for this). I think St. Ignatius is a welcoming community but needs some system and clearly enunciated principles to enable people more easily to share their talents and minister to all of us. I am forming a committee of parishioners to begin to address this.

Second, it is a wonderful thing to have such a vibrant Sunday School program and such a fine parish school. It is a blessing to have so many children part of our community. We are also blessed with good Sunday school and parish school staffs. They serve our children well in supporting our parents to educate them, and particularly, form them spiritually and morally.

Third, having read The Saint Ignatius Centennial Book (1908 - 2008), I am aware of the rich history of our parish. Through its over hundred years it faced many challenges to its actual founding and then to its continued existence. But those challenges were always met with faith and enthusiasm despite daunting obstacles from world and national events, or simply changing local circumstances. It seems that we may be facing one of those challenges currently. I am hoping we can face it in the same spirit. I am beginning to get a broad view of the financial grounding of our parish. It does not seem solid to me. Our magnificent building is aging, needing more care; indeed, the interior was last renewed twenty five years ago. There are some items needed that are essential for any public building, e.g., an elevator to allow universal access to our hall and church. Our main parish ministry (since 1912!), our school, requires almost a half million dollars of support each year. Thanks to the work of Parish Pastoral Council we were able to launch last month a census of the parish. Knowing who we are should give us better means to plan and to build our community and to know what realistic financial support our parish has. But I have no doubt that with advice from our Parish Finance Committee and with your support, soon we will have to make some important decisions for the future of our parish.



Peace and prayers,

*R. Frank Albright, S.J.*