



St Martin's



from Fr. Robert

My dear Brothers and sisters in Christ

APCM's properly review and celebrate the work of a parish during the previous 12 months ending on 31st December. This is a period I am not qualified to talk about, so forgive the eccentric nature of my report this APCM as I want to point us to the future. I do this conscious of what I have experienced over the past 5 months. What I have seen are some bruised and battered people, but also, significantly, a depth of love and welcome that I have not experienced in 23 years of arriving at new parishes. The more world-weary might turn around and say, "I bet that's what you say to all the girls!". But the truth is that I, and Sarah, Izzy and Alex, have been touched profoundly by your care of us on arrival and also during the death of my brother. This has not only sustained us, but convinced me of the wonderful things we have to offer to the people of Ruislip.

It is that which is best, which I want us to show to one another and, importantly, to this parish we are called to serve.

What I have also seen are elements that make us who we are. These are both universal and particular to us. They are:

We:

- are part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church
- are rooted in the catholic tradition of the Church of England
- seek to teach the catholic Faith
- enrich the spiritual lives of those who join us in worship particularly at Mass which is the source and summit of our mission and life together.
- are open for constant prayer in the heart of Ruislip
- proclaim the love of God in words and action to one another, the parish and the world, and so work to make the Church on earth a sign of God's eternal kingdom

Initially, I want us to show and celebrate (because it *is* here!) this last element when we, *proclaim the love of God in words and action to one another, the parish and the world, and so, work to make the Church on earth a sign of God's eternal kingdom.*

How we do this will be the focus of our life together as we go forward and will be worked out within our PCC sub-groups and the whole body of Christ at St Martin's during the next few months and years.

As I said we have much to celebrate and share for the future, and so I want to end where I began, with the desire to thank.

I now enter risky territory as I begin to name names!

In a short space of time I have become very aware that one of the gifts of St Martin's is the number of people doing a multitude of things, in this I give thanks. From faithful prayers offered on a Tuesday afternoon to lawns mowed on a Saturday morning, and clocks wound on a Wednesday to lunches served on a Thursday, and from toddlers engaged on a Friday to the telephone calls made every day of the week to the housebound. Like the bread broken at the altar here, new life, renewal and care is a seven day a week force for good at St Martin's.

We need to rejoice in this loving activity and I want to thank all who work to ensure the various groups happen which so enrich our life together.

I would especially like to express my deep gratitude to all those who work so hard to ensure the worshipping life of the parish continues. Particularly I want to thank the choir and Alan and the serving and sacristy team. This has meant I feel like a kid in a liturgical candy shop!

I would like to say a thank you to Gill who works so hard in the office, and is a wonderful colleague and does so much to help me and the parish, and guarantee the facilities of St Martin's are available to so many in our community.

Finally, I would like to thank Jacqueline and Ian for their amazing work as church wardens. We are and were blessed to have such excellent and generous wardens during what has been a very difficult time. They have helped me transition enormously, and I am indebted to them for their support and care.

As I said, these citations are conspicuous by the many absentees, but you all need to know how genuinely appreciative I am for all you do.

Thank you!