



From +John...

Dear Friends

In his first major document “*Evangelii Gaudium*” Pope Francis told us that if we are to evangelize we must start by “*renewing our personal encounter with Jesus Christ.*” (EG 3) That was in 2013. Pope Francis has written another document called *Gaudete et Exsultate*, which is on the call to holiness in the world today. In this latest apostolic exhortation, he is telling us how to renew our personal encounter with Jesus.

As far back as 1975 Pope Paul VI wrote an apostolic exhortation called *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. In that he told us of the need to “*deepen, consolidate and nourish*” our faith and allow it to mature (EN 54). There is clearly a need for all of us to keep growing in faith, to deepen our understanding, to come to a greater appreciation of what we believe.

Every one of us is obliged in some way to keep reading, to do some study, to change our ways of praying in order to grow in our relationship with God. In his exhortation Paul VI suggested that we seek the kingdom, build it up, live it and proclaim it (EN 8/13). In this new document Pope Francis tells us that growing in personal holiness cannot be separated from building the Kingdom of God. Our Christian life, our choice to live as disciples of Jesus demands that we live and show in words and deeds what we claim to profess. We know that we are not all called to be teachers or preachers, but we need to be able to offer some reasons for the hope that is in us (c/f 1 Peter 3.15)

Last year we had the Archdiocesan Synod with the theme “*Go You Are Sent.*” It was very clear from the discernment and the sharing, before,

during and after the Synod, that if we want to respond generously to the call and to be “sent out,” if we want to be serious about “mission effectiveness” then we need to grow in our understanding and appreciation of our faith. We need to be holy people. Pope Francis’ new letter will help us to do this, as it sets holiness in the context of daily life. He gives us “five great expressions” of love of God and neighbour that he considers particularly important. They are:

Perseverance, patience and meekness

Joy and a sense of humour

Boldness and passion

In community

In constant prayer

Please make an effort to read, study and pray with *Gaudete et Exsultate*. There is a link to this on the homepage of the Vatican website. With every blessing.

+ John

News

- Deep and **prayerful sympathy** goes to the Shanahan family, the Ss Peter and Pauls (Te Awakairangi) community and to the Parish on the death a few days ago of Nicola Shanahan, a loved and highly respected teacher and parishioner of Te Awakairangi.
- Please remember **Fr David Dowling** in prayer. Fr David suffered a small stroke a few days ago and will be having some time to rest and recuperate. Please note that visitors are restricted.
- Next week (26th April) **Father Michael Dooley** will be ordained Bishop of Dunedin and will succeed Bishop Colin Campbell, please remember Fr Michael in your prayer.

Do not be afraid of holiness. It will take away none of your energy, vitality or joy. On the contrary, you will become what the Father had in mind when he created you, and you will be faithful to your deepest self.