



Dear Friends,

*Nothing is so beautiful as spring!*

The warmer mornings and longer days remind us all of the breath taking beauty of our environment and our God at the centre of it all. In this Spring edition our regular contributors and a number of guest contributors reflect on Eco-spirituality.

Last week I attended the 2009 National Conference of Pastors and Pastoral Associates Conference in Newcastle. The focus of the gathering was to consider the five foundations of Parish Life and how to develop a Pastoral Plan to enliven their work place. There were a number of excellent speakers and workshops offering a range of views and opinions. On the final morning Father Frank Devoy spoke about Mission and Outreach: the call to engage people in the transformation of society to bring about The Kingdom. He spoke about our critical need to really build upon the inspiration of Vatican II and the Pope's John Paul's Apostolic Letter- *Novo Millennio Ineunte*.

'Let us go forward in hope! A new millennium is opening before the Church like a vast ocean upon which we shall venture, relying on the help of Christ. The Son of God, who became incarnate two thousand years ago out of love for humanity, is at work even today: we need discerning eyes to see this and, above all, a generous heart to become the instruments of his work.'  
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Father Frank Devoy described the complex and paradoxical Church we know and love as a people in need of experiencing the Mystery of God, so as to live in transformative communion and thus be formed for Mission.

**Mystery ↔ Communion ↔ Mission**

Devoy stated that we need to let go of any illusions about what a communion community is and to work for a dynamic of openness and trust which looked forward to empowering practical action across every parish. A heart ready for Mission.

Perhaps we can further inform our hearts with participation in the upcoming **National e-Conference - Gospel of Luke** on November 4<sup>th</sup>. It will build upon the success of the St Paul e-Conference. I encourage all to participate in your parish or work community. If you are reading this e- newsletter you have the skill and passion to make it happen in your place. If you would like a day's training on how to run an e-conference for your community you can join us at Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney on September 24<sup>th</sup>. Please see flyer for details in our What's On section. Give it a go- **Come to the table.**

Thank you to all those people who sent in their favourite prayer and congratulations to the winners of our 'favourite prayers'. I will share with you two of the many favourite prayers.

**"Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you, all things pass away: God never changes".**

St Theresa of Avila

This little mantra always reminds me of God's constant love and presence in my life, no matter what is going on or happening to me.

*And*

**Do you awaken us, O Lord  
And shed your light on us.  
That we might recognise and come to love  
The blessings you always hold out to us.  
And we shall realise that you stepped forward to show us your favour,  
And that you have not forgotten us.**

This prayer of St John of the Cross has been my favourite for many years, because it so well expresses the reality that God makes the first move, and that everything is a gift from Him.

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