



*The stained glass image of the Holy Family in Christ the King Parish, Coventry*

## Christmas Newsletter 2020

It has been a good year, everything considered.

One of the highlights in the first part of the year was a great Conference I prepared arising from my experience with the Ethnic Chaplaincies, Eparchies and Missions. The overall theme was "Mission" and it was most interesting and encouraging to see the different Ethnic communities and languages, different Rites and cultures; and different modes of Church Governance, coming together in a sense of a Common Mission to take our Catholic Christian Faith and way of life to the wider society in which we live.

Other highlights were visits to the different Ethnic Communities. As I write this Christmas Newsletter and judgement has been passed on the Traffickers, I am reminded especially of my visit to join the Vietnamese Chaplaincy in prayer for those who had died in the container on the way to a new life, here in England. Many were from a Catholic part of Vietnam.

Indeed, a number of our Ethnic groups are from parts of the world where there is persecution or a lack of economic resources, and once here, they enrich the Church with their vibrant Faith, commitment to family and different traditions, and, they enrich society with their hard work and skills.

The main disappointment came in March. I had planned for the first time ever to go off to Rome with a group of my former Parishioners to see the Rugby England v Italy, and the match was called off. The dreadful virus had arrived! However, I was able to keep my flight ticket and accommodation and got to Rome in October to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Genezzano to place the Chaplaincies under the protection of Our Lady.

The same weekend, I was able to record parts of the video which played a part in the online International Celebration marking One World Week later in the month. A number of Chaplaincies,

Eparchies and Missions took part and my Cousin, Con, helped to bring it all together in a lovely demonstration of the cultural riches of the Church in service of Unity and Peace.

But, perhaps the most exciting outcome of a year in “lockdown” has been the way in which my Internet skills have grown (helped by others of course!) I never thought I would be in the Diocesan Magazine “The Sower” as an example of how the Church has taken up the challenge of keeping in touch through Livestream Masses, creative Vlogs, and use of Zoom. But, there we are: every cloud has a silver lining!

Happiest for me personally has been the way people from my former Parish, family and Facebook friends have kept in touch; more than that, they have shown care and concern. I have not felt alone, and food and drinks are never far away!

It is nice to be sending out this Christmas Newsletter in great spirits despite the latest with the Virus - the new variation that is now spreading so quickly! I pray with all of you for those who are not so fortunate in having the Faith we share in Christ, the Light of the World; and those who are lonely and feel abandoned. Thank God the Church is doing so much to feed and care through Foodbanks, visits, phone calls and Zooms here at home, while reaching out to those in special need abroad. Our Catholic Ethnic Communities do not forget those in their homelands either.

**May you have a Happy and Blessed Christmas, and all Joy in 2021.**

21 December 2020

Mgr Daniel McHugh