

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- Rector's letter to the faithful
- Family Fellowship News
- An invitation to Lenten encounter

IN THIS
ISSUE:

Rector's letter to the faithful	1
Recto's letter to the faithful	2
Family Fellowship News	3
Invitation to Lent 2018	4

Franciscan Monthly

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2018

Letter to all the faithful



Fr. Meshack Mariri

"God has not called us to be original in everything. God called us to be effective."

Dominus Vobiscum (The Lord be with you)...

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

In him, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, you were marked with the Holy Spirit, to the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:3, 12-13).

To Christians and all people of good will in the St Francis of Assisi community of faith, greetings!

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace! (Romans 1:7)

In this, my first article, I would like to reflect on ways in which I believe God is calling us into the future. There are two important truths I like to share that may guide and inform our thoughts and our plans.

A loving Jesus who intends to be seen.

Jesus is a beacon; a kind of lighthouse. All the love that God has for this world was made visible through Jesus.

So, with this in mind, perhaps a question we need to carry with us during this year is: *"Within the context of this Parish of St*

Continued.....Letter to all the faithful

Francis of Assisi, in what ways is Jesus a beacon, a lighthouse, planted in Waterkloof?

In what ways is Jesus a beacon, a lighthouse, in the midst of these uncertain times?"

Jesus is not only visible, but **conspicuous**. *How is Jesus conspicuous through the worship, ministry and mission of St Francis of Assisi?*

A promise of intimacy with God.

The Transfiguration story (*Last Sunday after the Epiphany*) suggests that Peter, James and John find themselves on holy ground and in privileged company of Moses and Elijah, considered among the Jewish tradition to be the two greatest prophets known for their intimacy with God (Moses' face-to-face encounters with God and Elijah's encounter with God in a strange 'sound of utter silence.')

This intimacy with God is, I believe, a critical piece to the story because when one is so close to God, everything changes. The impossible suddenly becomes possible.

So, another question I wish we carry with us throughout this year is: *"How is St Francis of Assisi enabling and enriching intimate encounters and relationships with God through Christ?"*

So, in light of this, we reflect on ways in which we have been living examples of the risen Christ in the past here at St Francis of Assisi, and we envision the future God may be calling us into. In order to help focus our attention as

we discern God's plan for St Francis of Assisi at this moment in time, we have begun the groundwork for an intense and extensive visioning process.

There is also a need to review the characteristics of the early church (in light of our Diocesan theme), as well as the "Five Marks of Mission" in order to discern our core purpose and vision.

I give thanks to God for the opportunity to share the ministry of leadership with our assistant clergy – Fr Julian; Parish Council, our Parish staff, ministry leaders; and, of course, each and every one of you who share so generously your time, talent and treasure so that together we may increasingly become channels through which Jesus' love may be made visible – **conspicuous** - here among us, throughout our neighbourhood, and beyond.

Together, as we embrace this mandate, may we be ever mindful of our purpose: *To be a Christian community seeking to love God, grow in faith and serve the world.*

Yours in the ministry we share,

Pax Vobiscum (The Peace of the Lord be with you)

Fr. Meshack

The Venerable Dr L Meshack T Mariri, AHC †
RECTOR



By Jon-Reece Evans & Janine Evans

The family of St Francis of Assisi welcomes its newest member and youth leader Janine Evans.

Janine joined the Parish's youth ministry on 1st January 2018 as a Youth Worker and will be working alongside myself as we put up the momentum on new and existing programmes targeting the youth.

Janine, a holder of a diploma in Child Psychology as well as an Honours degree in Theology, brings with her wealth of experience in this space gained locally and internationally, especially in the USA.

The Parish is blessed to have Janine on board as she is passionate about Children and Worship. Since assumption of duty. Janine and I have been busy project-managing the newest ministry in the Parish: Family Fellowship which we would like to explain in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

St. Francis of Assisi will be launching a new ministry called Family Fellowship at the beginning of March. Social evenings will take place on a Friday at the Ministry House.

The idea behind Family Fellowship evenings is to invite new and existing families to our Parish and to have an evening of Fellowship, with a short and light teaching whilst creating a space where people can come and 'unwind' and connect after a long week of work. Childcare (babysitting) will be provided at no extra cost to make it an event where anyone and everyone is welcome to join in the fun.

The aim of Family Fellowship is to invite new families and individuals who spend their Friday nights, not knowing what to do with their time. We believe that this would be the ideal environment to provide an opportunity where people of all ages and from all walks of life, can gather in a Christian environment to meet new people, form a support structure, make new friends and ultimately welcome them into the greater family of St. Francis.

Family Fellowship will launch with a **bring and braai** on Friday 2nd of March from 18:30 – 20:30hrs (See the Pew Leaflet and the visit the Parish website for the advertisement)

We would like to thank the Parish of St. Francis for all the contributions made over the past few weeks towards helping the Ministry House grow into its bigger purpose.

We feel that this has been a tremendous kick start to the plans God has for St. Francis as well as the future generations who will be making use of the Ministry House.

We trust that this endeavor will not only impact the lives of the members in our own Parish as well as enrich the lives of the greater community.

An invitation to a Lenten encounter

By Monique Winn

The season of Lent is upon us and our theme at St Francis of Assisi is: *Thinning our lives so we may thicken our communion with God.*

We want to invite you to come on a Lenten Encounter. Come and see...

I believe God is more interested in what we are becoming, rather than in what we are giving up.

I invite you to consider Lent as less of a project in which you endeavour to fast, or renew a specific discipline and rather enter Lent as a sojourn- a temporary **stay** in one place.

A **stay** is about presence not productivity. Come and experience. Fast Lent as a project and enter Lent as an experience, as a sojourn with Jesus.

Invest your energy in staying present to the sacred history of Jesus's walk to the cross. With each reading dust off your childhood im-

agination and '**stay**' in the story.

Observe Jesus's response to John's death. Imagine yourself as one of the disciples trying in vain to hush blind Bartimaeus: *Throw your cloak under the colt's hooves as Jesus enters Jerusalem.*

John H Cole has reminded us: "*Spiritual disciplines do not transform, they only become relational opportunities to open the heart to the Spirit who transforms.*"

The purpose of Lent is not to force on us a few formal obligations, but to soften our hearts so that it may open itself to the realities of the spirit, to experience the hidden thirst and hunger for a personal relationship with God.

We will meet on **Wednesday evenings**, sharing a meal from **18:30 – 20:00hrs** at the **Ministry House** starting on **21st of February**.

All will be welcomed.



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Publisher: The Rector, St Francis of Assisi Anglican Parish

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St Francis of Assisi Mission

"To be role models of Kingdom values, immersed in Mission, Ministry and Social Justice"

St Francis of Assisi Vision

"We are a transformed and culturally diverse community of faith, bound together through caring, fellowship and worship, reaching out to influence our environment for Christ"

Bishop's Theme for 2018 – 2020

We'll drink from these wells. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teachings and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (Acts 2: 42)

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