

# **ST PETER'S WEEKLY NEWS**

## **11 JULY 2021**



## **Growing healthy Christians**

### **Fourth mark: faces the cost of change and growth**

In this letter, beginning four weeks ago, we are thinking about growing healthy Christians, based on a book by Robert Warren entitled 'The Healthy Churches Handbook'. In this book Fr Robert identifies seven marks of a healthy church and we are seeing if these can help us in our journey of faith, and if his thoughts can be applied to being a healthy Christian.

We asked last week what is a healthy Christian. It was suggested a healthy Christian is actively engaged in their own personal journey with God. This leads to our fourth mark: being willing and able to face change and growth.

Fr Robert suggests change is a sign of life and growth. Such change does not mean a radical overhaul or a organisational change. If nothing else, to do this regularly would prove to be too exhausting, spiritually as well as mentally. Change here is being able to embrace the past whilst being brave enough to look at new ways of doing things. In such an approach to change we must be prepared to take risks. It is easy to carry along the road we have always travelled but what do we learn? How do we grow? Taking risks, trying something new may just break new ground and open new vistas in our spiritual journey. In looking at new ways of doing things and in so doing being prepared to take risks we will on occasion experience crises. We can run away or ignore them but this would not encourage our growth. To face up to these challenges and working through them will strengthen our faith journey and encourage our spiritual development. This can then turn these experiences into positive experiences of change upon which we can be affirmed and can build.

What does this mean? I pray daily, I read my Bible, what more can I do? Are you open to different ways of praying? Have you used the modern form of the Lord's Prayer for example or explored prayer walking, tried a prayer labyrinth or listen to Gospel music? Have you joined a prayer group and branched out into different ways of praying? Have you set yourself daily prayer tasks or used the Jesus Prayer?

There are so many things we could be doing differently. We could be reading spiritual books, listening to prayer tracts, finding ways to engage in our faith life that is far more practical than we have done before – joining the PCC can be a spiritual journey...really! Think about your faith journey and rather than saying 'I do this because I always have' try 'what new thing can I do today'.

Love and prayers,

Fr D