

Official Newsletter of the
Auckland Service Group
for the Catholic
Charismatic Renewal
In the Auckland Diocese

A Sign of The Times

December 2013

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Monthly Message From Anil Baptist

Auckland CCR Chairperson



A voice cries "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord.... Is 40:3 (CCB)

The season of advent is a season of preparation. It is a preparation not for the first coming, an event which has already happened, but the second coming which is to happen. Recalling the events preceding the first coming, helps us to better prepare for the second.

Preparing for any event is a key feature of the event. Good preparation leads to a better event. Nowadays with venues being heavily booked preparation for a wedding has to begin at least a year in advance. For an annual conference when the doors of the venue are closed and the keys handed back to the owners, the preparation for the next year's event gets underway.

While we are very adept at preparing for our own events we do not seem to be adept at preparing for God's events. God does not do anything without first preparing us. He sends prophets to speak his word to us, but we reject them and sometimes kill them. The same thing happened at the time before Jesus, the same in his time, and the same today and the same will be tomorrow. Human behaviour will not change. God prepares us, because his time is sudden and swift.

So many times we are caught unawares, because we

are not prepared. We prepare financially for death by having insurance, will, trusts, etc. but are we mentally, emotionally and spiritually prepared for the death of a loved one? Many a time during a time of prolonged illness; instead of preparing for the death of a loved one, we run to every spiritual healer looking for miracles. Let us use this time of advent to learn how to prepare for the Lord's time. What are the events of God in my life that God is asking me to prepare for? Have I received any prophetic voice from the Lord? Use this advent period to listen to the voice of God and prepare the path for him.

On behalf of the service group I want to thank each and every one of you for your hard work during this year. We hope to continue doing the work in 2014 and look forward to your continuous and generous support through prayer, service and financial contributions.

On behalf of the service group I would like to wish each and every one of you and your families a blessed Christmas and a Happy 2014. Enjoy the summer break and come back refreshed.

God Bless. Anil



Appeal for Donations



Auckland Catholic Charismatic Renewal has, with the help of Peter and Sheila Baker (Centre Managers) and the Salvation and Praise Community, been running the Centre at St. Joseph's Takapuna for over two decades. With your loyal support and generous donations, together with the income generated from accommodation and catering services, we have been able to meet monthly running costs. We have however not been in a position to set aside money for refurbishment.

The time has now come to carry out basic refurbishment like replacing beds and mattresses, linen, carpets etc. The Centre needs to be put in a position to provide services to a standard of that of other such institutions. The funds currently generated are barely sufficient to meet day to day expenses.

This is an appeal for additional donations that will be used for refurbishing to a minimum contemporary standard. This will enable us to manage the current level of accommodation and catering services and extend the use of our available capacity more fully. Our account name and number are as follows:

Account Name: Auckland Catholic Charismatic Renewal Centre
Account Number: 030 275 0340098 00



A Big Thank You

To all the leaders who attended the November Gathering night and shared about their prayer groups. Due to time limitations we are sorry some groups didn't get to share. To encourage one another we will be asking different groups to write something about their prayer groups for **A Sign of The Times** next year. This month we have featured the **Spring of Grace** prayer group from the Chinese Community.

Spring of Grace Prayer Group

It is with much joy that we are sharing what we have done these few years since the formation of this prayer group.

Our group of five initially formed this prayer group after our community ran an Alpha course four years ago. Knowing that it is never easy to invite people to a charismatic prayer gathering, not to mention an entirely new fish (i.e. people who aren't baptised in the Catholic Church or don't have much knowledge about our Catholic faith), we decided to set up another form of gathering to make it more "user friendly," for anyone to join our community and to explore our faith or just to "come and see".

With this purpose, we formed the "Word of Life Gatherings (WOL)" which has been running twice a month up till now. So the main work of our prayer group is to serve at these WOL gatherings and to pray for them.

In a WOL gathering, we normally start with praise and worship, followed by a Bible sharing session, where we share our real life experiences through the love and grace of our God, the mercy of our Lord Jesus, and the amazing power of prayer, based on scriptures.

The gatherings will also incorporate a shared lunch or afternoon tea, where friendship could be fostered. In short, we advocate FUN, FOOD, FELLOWSHIP and FAITH (the magic 4Fs) in these gatherings as an evangelization endeavour, apart from spiritual development for our own

endeavour, apart from spiritual development for our own members.

Up to now, we have about 60 members coming regularly with 30 to 50 people attending each gathering. We have new-comers too from outside the community and have seen people touched through the amazing power of the Holy Spirit in these gatherings (Catholics and non-Catholics alike). To attract young families (we need children in our church, don't we?), we have recently started to run a kids ministry alongside Word of Life gatherings (thanks to the effort and enthusiasm of our young generation), once a month at this stage. Hopefully, parents and children will grow together.

In short, we have found these gatherings a very good channel for evangelisation due to the very heart warming atmosphere, plus the touching real life stories of the participants, witnessing Christ's love and mercy.

Our prayer group members are very actively involved or are organisers of other activities within the community with the main goal of evangelisation.

Our prayer group, Spring of Grace, has now become a place of in-depth sharing on God's Word for our own spiritual enrichment and intercessory prayers. We trust that through the "Life in the Spirit" seminars, our prayer group will see more members in future.

May Holy Spirit guide us!



Dates for your Diary 2014

Friday 7 March - Mass with Bishop Pat

Fri 14 & Sat 15 March - ACCR Lenten Retreat

Led by Fr Maria Selvan - more details to follow

Friday 11 April - ACCR Gathering Night, St Joseph's

ACCR CHRISTMAS PARTY

Theme: Angels & Saints (come dressed as your favourite Saint or as an Angel)

Date: FRIDAY 13 Dec 2013

Time: 7pm

Activity: Carols By Candlelight

Supper: please bring a plate

Who: All ACCR Prayer Group Members Welcome

Where: St Josephs Centre, 1 Fred Thomas Drive, Takapuna.

The Office of the Auckland Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Will Close for the Christmas Holidays on

Friday 20th December 2013

and Open on

Monday 20th January 2014

**St Joseph's Centre and
St Joseph's Centre Gift Shop**

Will Close on

Monday 23rd December 2013

St Joseph's Centre Gift Shop

Will open for limited trading hours

10am – 1pm

Monday 13th January 2014

Normal trading hours will be resumed on

Monday 20th January 2014

Mon - Fri: 9am - 5pm

Sat: 9.30am – 2pm

Contact Us: Ph 09 489 5613

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