

A HEART TO HEART CHAT ON PARTING

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Cheers!!! They say 'newness' always brings joy, just like each season, and as such New Year brings additional charm and newness. So it is time that the Nativity community deserves the same. I am glad that you will have a wonderful servant leader in the person of Fr. Paul Mwaura, your new parish priest, appointed by the Archbishop effective from 29 January. He is currently assisting in the Yorke Peninsula Parish. He will take over Nativity parish from the following Saturday and so it will be his first mass with you next weekend.

I was expecting this news as my congregation had asked the Archbishop to relive me to make me available to serve again in India from May, but the timing of the changeover is happening quite soon. At the same time it is good for the new person to begin with the New Year. I will probably be in the town before I fly back to India at the end of February - if all goes well with my booked flights!

I take this opportunity to thank each of you, my lovely brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, the parish Pastoral Associate, Bianca Cotton, the PPC Chair John Giles, PFC Chair Ron Mazzachi, PPC and PFC members, past Chairs and members of both councils and the Volunteers on our endless list for all your sacrifices and support given to me in ministering the parish. I will always remember each of you, your great faith, and your sacrifices in my prayers.

Thank you once again for making me feel accepted and feel loved in numerous ways. Thank you especially when it came to listening to me, with my un-Ossie English (It was difficult to find one in a multicultural context as each one speaks differently! I have learnt many things from you and I will be returning blessed and enriched in my faith journey with a lot of sweet memories.

I have reaped what others had sown. I have only tried to sow more seeds. My strong desire was to help you grow in the Lord. At times I had to challenge you to make you stronger. Issues that remain buried can do harm when it comes to faith. After all I was not in charge; someone else was and it is, Christ the Lord. One unfulfilled desire that remains, which is also the prime need for the present church, is to re start the youth ministry in the parish. What hurts most and will hurt the church in the future is if we don't see much thought and priority given to youth in the coming Plenary Council.

I don't mind a few thorns looking at the abundance of roses like you. I have no enemies but I do understand that 'meaning' lies in people, not in words. My passion for our faith may have given rise to some words on an occasion. I have not meant that and so I simply apologise!

I am very happy to be able to re-join my ministry I left behind four years ago. I will likely be in a parish again and will be living with more priests of my congregation and which I have missed immensely. I would be happy to welcome any one of you if you visit Goa. I seek your prayers as I will also be joining my 10 Colleagues to thank God for 25 years of anointed ministry at the end of April.

May God deliver us from this Pandemic.

With Warm regards and blessings!

Fr. San (E: santiagaf@hotmail.com)